

The Waverley Novels by
Sir Walter Scott

Fortunes of Nigel
St. Ronan's Well



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INTRODUCTION TO THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL

But why should lordlings all our praise engross ?
Rise, honest muse, and sing the Man of Ross.

POPE.

HAVING, in the tale of the *Heart of Midlothian*, succeeded in some degree in awakening an interest in behalf of one devoid of those accomplishments which belong to a heroine almost by right, I was next tempted to choose a hero upon the same unpromising plan ; and as worth of character, goodness of heart, and rectitude of principle were necessary to one who laid no claim to high birth, romantic sensibility, or any of the usual accomplishments of those who strut through the pages of this sort of composition, I made free with the name of a person who has left the most magnificent proofs of his benevolence and charity that the capital of Scotland has to display.

To the Scottish reader little more need be said than that the man alluded to is George Heriot. But for those south of the Tweed it may be necessary to add, that the person so named was a wealthy citizen of Edinburgh, and the king's goldsmith, who followed James to the English capital, and was so successful in his profession as to die, in 1624, extremely wealthy for that period. He had no children ; and after making a full provision for such relations as might have claims upon him, he left the residue of his fortune to establish an hospital, in which the sons of Edinburgh freemen are gratuitously brought up and educated for the station to which their talents may recommend them, and are finally enabled to enter life under respectable auspices. The hospital¹ in which this charity is maintained is a noble quadrangle of the Gothic order, and as ornamental to the city as a building as the manner in which the youths are provided for and educated renders it useful to the community as an institution. To the honour of those who have the manage-

¹ See George Heriot's Hospital. Note 1.

ment (the magistrates and clergy of Edinburgh), the funds of the hospital have increased so much under their care that it now supports and educates one hundred and thirty youths annually, many of whom have done honour to their country in different situations.

The founder of such a charity as this may be reasonably supposed to have walked through life with a steady pace and an observant eye, neglecting no opportunity of assisting those who were not possessed of the experience necessary for their own guidance. In supposing his efforts directed to the benefit of a young nobleman, misguided by the aristocratic haughtiness of his own time, and the prevailing tone of selfish luxury which seems more peculiar to ours, as well as the seductions of pleasure which are predominant in all, some amusement, or even some advantage, might, I thought, be derived from the manner in which I might bring the exertions [of this civic mentor to bear in his pupil's behalf. I am, I own, no great believer in the moral utility to be derived from fictitious compositions; yet, if in any case a word spoken in season may be of advantage to a young person, it must surely be when it calls upon him to attend to the voice of principle and self-denial, instead of that of precipitate passion. I could not, indeed, hope or expect to represent my prudent and benevolent citizen in a point of view so interesting as that of the peasant girl, who nobly sacrificed her family affections to the integrity of her moral character. Still, however, something I hoped might be done not altogether unworthy the fame which George Heriot has secured by the lasting benefits he has bestowed on his country.

It appeared likely that, out of this simple plot, I might weave something attractive; because the reign of James I., in which George Heriot flourished, gave unbounded scope to invention in the fable, while at the same time it afforded greater variety and discrimination of character than could, with historical consistency, have been introduced, if the scene had been laid a century earlier. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu has said, with equal truth and taste, that the most romantic region of every country is that where the mountains unite themselves with the plains or lowlands. For similar reasons, it may be in like manner said that the most picturesque period of history is that when the ancient rough and wild manners of a barbarous age are just becoming innovated upon and contrasted by the illumination of increased or revived learning and the instruc-

tions of renewed or reformed religion. The strong contrast produced by the opposition of ancient manners to those which are gradually subduing them affords the lights and shadows necessary to give effect to a fictitious narrative; and while such a period entitles the author to introduce incidents of a marvellous and improbable character, as arising out of the turbulent independence and ferocity, belonging to old habits of violence, still influencing the manners of a people who had been so lately in a barbarous state; yet, on the other hand, the characters and sentiments of many of the actors may, with the utmost probability, be described with great variety of shading and delineation, which belongs to the newer and more improved period, of which the world has but lately received the light.

The reign of James I. of England possessed this advantage in a peculiar degree. Some beams of chivalry, although its planet had been for some time set, continued to animate and gild the horizon, and although probably no one acted precisely on its Quixotic dictates, men and women still talked the chivalrous language of Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*; and the ceremonial of the tilt-yard was yet exhibited, though it now only flourished as a *place de carrousel*. Here and there a high-spirited Knight of the Bath (witness the too scrupulous Lord Herbert of Cherbury) was found devoted enough to the vows he had taken to imagine himself obliged to compel, by the sword's point, a fellow-knight or squire to restore the top-knot of ribbon which he had stolen from a fair damsel;¹ but yet, while men were taking each other's lives on such punctilios of honour, the hour was already arrived when Bacon was about to teach the world that they were no longer to reason from authority to fact, but to establish truth by advancing from fact to fact, till they fixed an indisputable authority, not from hypothesis, but from experiment.

The state of society in the reign of James I. was also strangely disturbed, and the license of a part of the community was perpetually giving rise to acts of blood and violence. The bravo of the Queen's day, of whom Shakspeare has given us so many varieties as Bardolph, Nym, Pistol, Peto, and the other companions of Falstaff, men who had their humours, or their particular turn of extravaganza, had, since the commencement of the Low Country wars, given way to a race of sworders who used the rapier and dagger instead of the far less dangerous sword and buckler; so that a historian says on this subject—

¹ See Lord Herbert of Cherbury's *Memoirs*.

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That private quarrels were nourished, but especially between the Scots and the English, and duels in every street maintained; divers sects and peculiar titles passed unpunished and unregarded, as the sect of the roaring boys, bonaventors, bravadors, quarterors, and such-like, being persons prodigal and of great expense, who, having run themselves into debt, were constrained to next run into factions, to defend themselves from danger of the law. These received countenance from divers of the nobility and the citizens through lasciviousness consuming their estates, it was like that the number [of these desperadoes] would rather increase than diminish; and under these pretences they entered into many desperate enterprises, and scarce any durst walk in the street after nine at night.¹

The same authority assures us farther that —

Ancient gentlemen, who had left their inheritance whole and well furnished with goods and chattels (having thereupon kept good houses) unto their sons, lived to see part consumed in riot and excess, and the rest in possibility to be utterly lost; the holy state of matrimony made but a May-game, by which divers families had been subverted, brothel houses much frequented, and even great persons prostituting their bodies to the intent to satisfy their lusts, consumed their substance in lascivious appetites. And of all sorts, such knights and gentlemen, as either through pride or prodigality had consumed their substance, repairing to the city, and to the intent to consume their virtue also, lived dissolute lives; many of their ladies and daughters, to the intent to maintain themselves according to their dignity, prostituting their bodies in shameful manner; ale-houses, dicing-houses, taverns, and places of iniquity beyond manner abounding in most places.

Nor is it only in the pages of a Puritanical, perhaps a satirical, writer that we find so shocking and disgusting a picture of the coarseness of the beginning of the 17th century. On the contrary, in all the comedies of the age, the principal character for gaiety and wit is a young heir who has totally altered the establishment of the father to whom he has succeeded, and, to use the old simile, who resembles a fountain which plays off in idleness and extravagance the wealth which its careful parents painfully had assembled in hidden reservoirs.

And yet, while that spirit of general extravagance seemed at work over a whole kingdom, another and very different sort of men were gradually forming the staid and resolved characters which afterwards displayed themselves during the civil wars, and powerfully regulated and affected the character of the whole English nation, until, rushing from one extreme to another, they sunk in a gloomy fanaticism the splendid traces of the reviving fine arts.

¹ *History of the First Fourteen Years of King James's Reign*, in Somers's Tracts, edited by Scott, vol. ii. p. 266.

From the quotations which I have produced, the selfish and disgusting conduct of Lord Dalgarno will not perhaps appear overstrained; nor will the scenes in Whitefriars and places of similar resort seem too highly coloured. This indeed is far from being the case. It was in James I.'s reign that vice first appeared affecting the better classes in its gross and undisguised depravity. The entertainments and amusements of Elizabeth's time had an air of that decent restraint which became the court of a maiden sovereign; and in that earlier period, to use the words of Burke, vice lost half its evil by being deprived of all its grossness. In James's reign, on the contrary, the coarsest pleasures were publicly and unlimitedly indulged, since, according to Sir John Harrington, the men wallowed in beastly delights; and even ladies abandoned their society and rolled about in intoxication. After a ludicrous account of a masque, in which the actors had got drunk and behaved themselves accordingly, he adds: 'I have much marvelled at these strange pageantries, and they do bring to my recollection what passed of this sort in our Queen's days, in which I was sometimes an assistant and partaker; but never did I see such lack of good order and sobriety as I have now done. The gunpowder fright is got out of all our heads, and we are going on hereabout as if the devil was contriving every man should blow up himself by wild riot, excess, and devastation of time and temperance. The great ladies do go well masqued; and, indeed, it be the only show of their modesty to conceal their countenance; but alack, they meet with such countenance to uphold their strange doing, that I marvel not at aught that happens.'¹

Such being the state of the court, coarse sensuality brought along with it its ordinary companion, a brutal degree of undisguised selfishness, destructive alike of philanthropy and good-breeding; both of which, in their several spheres, depend upon the regard paid by each individual to the interest as well as the feelings of others. It is in such a time that the heartless and shameless man of wealth and power may, like the supposed Lord Dalgarno, brazen out the shame of his villainies, and affect to triumph in their consequences, so long as they were personally advantageous to his own pleasures or profit.

Alsatia is elsewhere explained as a cant name for Whitefriars, which, possessing certain privileges of sanctuary, became for that reason a nest of those mischievous characters who

¹ See Debauchery of the Period. Note 2.

were generally obnoxious to the law. These privileges were derived from its having been an establishment of the Carmelites, or White Friars, founded, says Stow, in his *Survey of London*, by Sir Richard Grey, in 1241. Edward I. gave them a plot of ground in Fleet Street, to build their church upon. The edifice, then erected, was rebuilt by Courtney, Earl of Devonshire, in the reign of Edward. In the time of the Reformation the place retained its immunities as a sanctuary, and James I. confirmed and added to them by a charter in 1608. Shadwell was the first author who made some literary use of Whitefriars, in his play of the *Squire of Alsatia*, which turns upon the plot of the *Adelphi* of Terence.

In this old play, two men of fortune, brothers, educate two young men, sons to the one and nephews to the other, each under his own separate system of rigour and indulgence. The elder of the subjects of this experiment, who has been very rigidly brought up, falls at once into all the vices of the town, is debauched by the cheats and bullies of Whitefriars, and, in a word, becomes the Squire of Alsatia. The poet gives, as the natural and congenial inhabitants of the place, such characters as the reader will find in Note 3 (p. 448).¹ The play, as we learn from the dedication to the Earl of Dorset and Middlesex, was successful above the author's expectations, 'no comedy these many years having filled the theatre so long together. And I had the great honour,' continues Shadwell, 'to find so many friends, that the house was never so full since it was built as upon the third day of this play, and vast numbers went away that could not be admitted.'² From the *Squire of Alsatia* the Author derived some few hints, and learned the footing on which the bullies and thieves of the sanctuary stood with their neighbours, the fiery young students of the Temple, of which some intimation is given in the dramatic piece.

Such are the materials to which the Author stands indebted for the composition of the *Fortunes of Nigel*, a novel which may be perhaps one of those that are more amusing on a second perusal than when read a first time for the sake of the story, the incidents of which are few and meagre.

The Introductory Epistle is written, in Lucio's phrase, 'according to the trick,' and would never have appeared had the writer meditated making his avowal of the work.³ As it is

¹ See *Alsatian Characters*. Note 3.

² Dedication to the *Squire of Alsatia*, Shadwell's *Works*, vol. iv.
³ [See Lockhart's *Life*, vol. vi. p. 407 and vol. vii. p. 26.]

the privilege of a masque or incognito to speak in a feigned voice and assumed character, the Author attempted, while in disguise, some liberties of the same sort; and while he continues to plead upon the various excuses which the Introduction contains, the present acknowledgment must serve as an apology for a species of 'hoity toity, whisky frisky' pertness of manner, which, in his avowed character, the Author should have considered as a departure from the rules of civility and good taste.

ABBOTSFORD, 1st July 1831.

INTRODUCTORY EPISTLE

CAPTAIN CLUTTERBUCK

TO

THE REVEREND DR. DRYASDUST

DEAR SIR,

I READILY accept of, and reply to, the civilities with which you have been pleased to honour me in your obliging letter, and entirely agree with your quotation, of '*Quam bonum et quam jucundum!*' We may indeed esteem ourselves as come of the same family, or, according to our country proverb, as being all one man's bairns; and there needed no apology on your part, reverend and dear sir, for demanding of me any information which I may be able to supply respecting the subject of your curiosity. The interview which you allude to took place in the course of last winter, and is so deeply imprinted on my recollection that it requires no effort to collect all its most minute details.

You are aware that the share which I had in introducing the romance called *The Monastery* to public notice has given me a sort of character in the literature of our Scottish metropolis. I no longer stand in the outer shop of our biblioplists,

bargaining for the objects of my curiosity with an unrespective shop-lad, hustled among boys who come to buy Corderies¹ and copy-books, and servant-girls cheapening a pennyworth of paper, but am cordially welcomed by the bibliopolist himself, with, 'Pray, walk into the back shop, captain. Boy, get a chair for Captain Clutterbuck. There is the newspaper, captain — to-day's paper'; or, 'Here is the last new work; there is a folder, make free with the leaves'; or, 'Put it in your pocket and carry it home'; or, 'We will make a bookseller of you, sir, you shall have it at trade price.' Or, perhaps, if it is the worthy trader's own publication, his liberality may even extend itself to — 'Never mind booking such a trifle to *you*, sir; it is an over-copy. Pray, mention the work to your reading friends.' I say nothing of the snug, well-selected literary party arranged around a turbot, leg of five-year-old mutton, or some such gear, or of the circulation of a quiet bottle of Robert Cockburn's² choicest black — nay, perhaps of his best blue — to quicken our talk about old books, or our plans for new ones. All these are comforts reserved to such as are freemen of the corporation of letters, and I have the advantage of enjoying them in perfection.

But all things change under the sun; and it is with no ordinary feelings of regret that, in my annual visits to the metropolis, I now miss the social and warm-hearted welcome of the quick-witted and kindly friend³ who first introduced me to the public, who had more original wit than would have set up a dozen of professed sayers of good things, and more racy humour than would have made the fortune of as many more. To this great deprivation has been added, I trust for a time only, the loss of another bibliopolical friend,⁴ whose vigorous intellect and liberal ideas have not only rendered his native country the mart of her own literature, but established there a court of letters, which must command respect, even from those most inclined to dissent from many of its canons. The effect of these changes, operated in a great measure by the strong sense and sagacious calculations of an individual who knew how to avail himself, to an unhopcd-for extent, of the various kinds of talent which his country produced, will probably appear more clearly to the generation which shall follow the present.

¹ One of the most common school-books of the last century — *Colloquiorum Centuria Selecta Maturini Corderii* (Laing).

² Late wine-merchant in Edinburgh (Laing).

³ Mr. John Ballantyne, bookseller (Laing). See *Bride of Lammermoor*, Note 3, p. 316.

⁴ Mr. Archibald Constable (Laing).

I entered the shop at the Cross, to inquire after the health of my worthy friend, and learned with satisfaction that his residence in the south had abated the rigour of the symptoms of his disorder. Availing myself, then, of the privileges to which I have alluded, I strolled onward in that labyrinth of small dark rooms or crypts, to speak our own antiquarian language, which form the extensive back-settlements of that celebrated publishing-house. Yet, as I proceeded from one obscure recess to another, filled, some of them with old volumes, some with such as, from the equality of their rank on the shelves, I suspected to be the less saleable modern books of the concern, I could not help feeling a holy horror creep upon me, when I thought of the risk of intruding on some ecstatic bard giving vent to his poetical fury; or, it might be, on the yet more formidable privacy of a band of critics, in the act of worrying the game which they had just run down. In such a supposed case, I felt by anticipation the horrors of the Highland seers, whom their gift of deuteroscopy compels to witness things unmeet for mortal eye; and who, to use the expression of Collins,

Heartless, oft, like moody madness, stare,
To see the phantom train their secret work prepare.

Still, however, the irresistible impulse of an undefined curiosity drove me on through this succession of darksome chambers, till, like the jeweller of Delhi in the house of the magician Bennaskar, I at length reached a vaulted room, dedicated to secrecy and silence, and beheld, seated by a lamp, and employed in reading a blotted revise,¹ the person, or perhaps I should rather say the eidolon, or representative vision, of the AUTHOR OF *WAVERLEY*! You will not be surprised at the filial instinct which enabled me at once to acknowledge the features borne by this venerable apparition, and that I at once bended the knee, with the classical salutation of, *Salve, magne parens*! The vision, however, cut me short by pointing to a seat, intimating at the same time that my presence was not unexpected, and that he had something to say to me.

I sat down with humble obedience, and endeavoured to note the features of him with whom I now found myself so unexpectedly in society. But on this point I can give your reverence no satisfaction; for, besides the obscurity of the apartment, and the fluttered state of my own nerves, I seemed to myself overwhelmed by a sense of filial awe, which prevented

¹ The uninitiated must be informed that a second proof-sheet is so called.

my noting and recording what it is probable the personage before me might most desire to have concealed. Indeed, his figure was so closely veiled and wimpled, either with a mantle, morning-gown, or some such loose garb, that the verses of Spenser might well have been applied —

Yet, certes, by her face and physnomy,
Whether she man or woman only were,
That could not any creature well descry.

I must, however, go on as I have begun, to apply the masculine gender; for, notwithstanding very ingenious reasons, and indeed something like positive evidence, have been offered to prove the Author of *Waverley* to be two ladies of talent, I must abide by the general opinion, that he is of the rougher sex. There are in his writings too many things

Quæ maribus sola tribuuntur,

to permit me to entertain any doubt on that subject. I will proceed, in the manner of dialogue, to repeat as nearly as I can what passed betwixt us, only observing that, in the course of the conversation, my timidity imperceptibly gave way under the familiarity of his address; and that, in the concluding part of our dialogue, I perhaps argued with fully as much confidence as was beseeing.

Author of Waverley. I was willing to see you, Captain Clutterbuck, being the person of my family whom I have most regard for, since the death of Jedediah Cleishbotham; and I am afraid I may have done you some wrong in assigning to you *The Monastery* as a portion of my effects. I have some thoughts of making it up to you, by naming you godfather to this yet unborn babe — (he indicated the proof-sheet with his finger). But first, touching *The Monastery* — how says the world? You are abroad and can learn.

Captain Clutterbuck. Hem! hem! The inquiry is delicate. I have not heard any complaints from the publishers.

Author. That is the principal matter; but yet an indifferent work is sometimes towed on by those which have left harbour before it, with the breeze in their poop. What say the critics?

Captain. There is a general — feeling — that the White Lady is no favourite.

Author. I think she is a failure myself; but rather in execution than conception. Could I have evoked an *esprit follet*, at

the same time fantastic and interesting, capricious and kind ; a sort of wildfire of the elements, bound by no fixed laws or motives of action, faithful and fond, yet teasing and uncertain —

Captain. If you will pardon the interruption, sir, I think you are describing a pretty woman.

Author. On my word, I believe I am. I must invest my elementary spirits with a little human flesh and blood : they are too fine-drawn for the present taste of the public.

Captain. They object, too, that the object of your nixie ought to have been more uniformly noble. Her ducking the priest was no Naiad-like amusement.

Author. Ah ! they ought to allow for the capriccios of what is, after all, but a better sort of goblin. The bath into which Ariel, the most delicate creation of Shakspeare's imagination, seduces our jolly friend Trinculo, was not of amber or rose-water. But no one shall find me rowing against the stream. I care not who knows it, I write for general amusement ; and, though I never will aim at popularity by what I think unworthy means, I will not, on the other hand, be pertinacious in the defence of my own errors against the voice of the public.

Captain. You abandon, then, in the present work (looking, in my turn, towards the proof sheet), the mystic, and the magical, and the whole system of signs, wonders, and omens ? There are no dreams, or presages, or obscure allusions to future events ?

Author. Not a Cock Lane scratch, my son — not one bounce on the drum of Tedworth — not so much as the poor tick of a solitary death-watch in the wainscot. All is clear and above board : a Scots metaphysician might believe every word of it.

Captain. And the story is, I hope, natural and probable ; commencing strikingly, proceeding naturally, ending happily, like the course of a famed river, which gushes from the mouth of some obscure and romantic grotto ; then gliding on, never pausing, never precipitating its course, visiting, as it were, by natural instinct, whatever worthy subjects of interest are presented by the country through which it passes ; widening and deepening in interest as it flows on ; and at length arriving at the final catastrophe as at some mighty haven, where ships of all kinds strike sail and yard ?

Author. Hey ! hey ! what the deuce is all this ? Why, 't is Ercles' vein, and it would require some one much more like Hercules than I to produce a story which should gush, and

glide, and never pause, and visit, and widen, and deepen, and all the rest on't. I should be chin-deep in the grave, man, before I had done with my task; and, in the meanwhile, all the quirks and quiddities which I might have devised for my reader's amusement would lie rotting in my gizzard, like Sancho's suppressed witticisms, when he was under his master's displeasure. There never was a novel written on this plan while the world stood.

Captain. Pardon me — *Tom Jones.*

Author. True, and perhaps *Amelia* also. Fielding had high notions of the dignity of an art which he may be considered as having founded. He challenges a comparison between the novel and the epic. Smollett, Le Sage, and others, emancipating themselves from the strictness of the rules he has laid down, have written rather a history of the miscellaneous adventures which befall an individual in the course of life than the plot of a regular and connected epopœia, where every step brings us a point nearer to the final catastrophe. These great masters have been satisfied if they amused the reader upon the road; though the conclusion only arrived because the tale must have an end, just as the traveller alights at the inn because it is evening.

Captain. A very commodious mode of travelling, for the author at least. In short, sir, you are of opinion with Bayes — 'What the devil does the plot signify, except to bring in fine things?'

Author. Grant that I were so, and that I should write with sense and spirit a few scenes unlaboured and loosely put together, but which had sufficient interest in them to amuse in one corner the pain of body; in another, to relieve anxiety of mind; in a third place, to unwrinkle a brow bent with the furrows of daily toil; in another, to fill the place of bad thoughts, or to suggest better; in yet another, to induce an idler to study the history of his country; in all, save where the perusal interrupted the discharge of serious duties, to furnish harmless amusement — might not the author of such a work, however inartificially executed, plead for his errors and negligences the excuse of the slave, who, about to be punished for having spread the false report of a victory, saved himself by exclaiming — 'Am I to blame, O Athenians, who have given you one happy day?'

Captain. Will your goodness permit me to mention an anecdote of my excellent grandmother?

Author. I see little she can have to do with the subject, Captain Clutterbuck.

Captain. It may come into our dialogue on Bayes's plan. The sagacious old lady — rest her soul! — was a good friend to the church, and could never hear a minister maligned by evil tongues without taking his part warmly. There was one fixed point, however, at which she always abandoned the cause of her reverend *protégé*: it was so soon as she learned he had preached a regular sermon against slanderers and backbiters.

Author. And what is that to the purpose?

Captain. Only that I have heard engineers say that one may betray the weak point to the enemy by too much ostentation of fortifying it.

Author. And, once more I pray, what is that to the purpose?

Captain. Nay, then, without farther metaphor, I am afraid this new production, in which your generosity seems willing to give me some concern, will stand much in need of apology, since you think proper to begin your defence before the case is on trial. The story is hastily huddled up; I will venture a pint of claret.

Author. A pint of port, I suppose you mean?

Captain. I say of claret — good claret of the monastery. Ah, sir, would you but take the advice of your friends, and try to deserve at least one-half of the public favour you have met with, we might all drink Tokay!

Author. I care not what I drink, so the liquor be wholesome.

Captain. Care for your reputation, then — for your fame.

Author. My fame! I will answer you as a very ingenious, able, and experienced friend, being counsel for the notorious Jem MacCoul,¹ replied to the opposite side of the bar, when they laid weight on his client's refusing to answer certain queries, which they said any man who had a regard for his reputation would not hesitate to reply to. 'My client,' said he — by the way, Jem was standing behind him at the time, and a rich scene it was — 'is so unfortunate as to have no regard for his reputation; and I should deal very uncandidly with the court should I say he had any that was worth his attention.' I am, though from very different reasons, in Jem's happy state of indifference. Let fame follow those who have a substantial shape. A shadow — and an impersonal author is nothing better — can cast no shade.

¹ This character was a native of London, who was tried and convicted in 1820 of robbing a Glasgow bank of £20,000 (*Laing*).

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Captain. You are not now, perhaps, so impersonal as heretofore. These *Letters*¹ to the Member for the University of Oxford —

Author. Show the wit, genius, and delicacy of the author, which I heartily wish to see engaged on a subject of more importance; and show, besides, that the preservation of my character of incognito has engaged early talent in the discussion of a curious question of evidence. But a cause, however ingeniously pleaded, is not therefore gained. You may remember the neatly-wrought chain of circumstantial evidence, so artificially brought forward to prove Sir Philip Francis's title to the *Letters of Junius*, seemed at first irrefragable; yet the influence of the reasoning has passed away, and Junius, in the general opinion, is as much unknown as ever. But on this subject I will not be soothed or provoked into saying one word more. To say who I am not would be one step towards saying who I am; and as I desire not, any more than a certain justice of peace mentioned by Shenstone, the noise or report such things make in the world, I shall continue to be silent on a subject which, in my opinion, is very undeserving the noise that has been made about it, and still more unworthy of the serious employment of such ingenuity as has been displayed by the young letter-writer.

Captain. But allowing, my dear sir, that you care not for your personal reputation, or for that of any literary person upon whose shoulders your faults may be visited, allow me to say that common gratitude to the public, which has received you so kindly, and to the critics who have treated you so leniently, ought to induce you to bestow more pains on your story.

Author. I do entreat you, my son, as Dr. Johnson would have said, 'free your mind from cant.' For the critics, they have their business, and I mine; as the nursery proverb goes —

The children in Holland take pleasure in making
What the children in England take pleasure in breaking.

I am their humble jackal, too busy in providing food for them to have time for considering whether they swallow or reject it. To the public I stand pretty nearly in the relation of the postman who leaves a packet at the door of an individual. If it

¹ *Letters to Richard Heber, Esq., Member for the University of Oxford, containing Critical Remarks on the Waverley Novels, and an Attempt to ascertain the Author.* By J. L. Adolphus, Lond. 1821 (*Latng*).

contains pleasing intelligence — a billet from a mistress, a letter from an absent son, a remittance from a correspondent supposed to be bankrupt — the letter is acceptably welcome, and read and re-read, folded up, filed, and safely deposited in the bureau. If the contents are disagreeable, if it comes from a dun or from a bore, the correspondent is cursed, the letter is thrown into the fire, and the expense of postage is heartily regretted ; while all the time the bearer of the despatches is, in either case, as little thought on as the snow of last Christmas. The utmost extent of kindness between the author and the public which can really exist is, that the world are disposed to be somewhat indulgent to the succeeding works of an original favourite, were it but on account of the habit which the public mind has acquired ; while the author very naturally thinks well of *their* taste who have so liberally applauded *his* productions. But I deny there is any call for gratitude, properly so called, either on one side or the other.

Captain. Respect to yourself, then, ought to teach caution.

Author. Ay, if caution could augment the chance of my success. But, to confess to you the truth, the works and passages in which I have succeeded have uniformly been written with the greatest rapidity ; and when I have seen some of these placed in opposition with others, and commended as more highly finished, I could appeal to pen and standish that the parts in which I have come feebly off were by much the more laboured. Besides, I doubt the beneficial effect of too much delay, both on account of the author and the public. A man should strike while the iron is hot, and hoist sail while the wind is fair. If a successful author keep not the stage, another instantly takes his ground. If a writer lie by for ten years ere he produces a second work, he is superseded by others ; or, if the age is so poor of genius that this does not happen, his own reputation becomes his greatest obstacle. The public will expect the new work to be ten times better than its predecessor ; the author will expect it should be ten times more popular, and 'tis a hundred to ten that both are disappointed.

Captain. This may justify a certain degree of rapidity in publication, but not that which is proverbially said to be no speed. You should take time at least to arrange your story.

Author. That is a sore point with me, my son. Believe me, I have not been fool enough to neglect ordinary precautions. I have repeatedly laid down my future work to scale, divided it into volumes and chapters, and endeavoured to construct a

story which I meant should evolve itself gradually and strikingly, maintain suspense, and stimulate curiosity ; and which, finally, should terminate in a striking catastrophe. But I think there is a demon who seats himself on the feather of my pen when I begin to write, and leads it astray from the purpose. Characters expand under my hand ; incidents are multiplied ; the story lingers, while the materials increase ; my regular mansion turns out a Gothic anomaly, and the work is closed long before I have attained the point I proposed.

Captain. Resolution and determined forbearance might remedy that evil.

Author. Alas ! my dear sir, you do not know the force of paternal affection. When I light on such a character as Bailie Jarvie, or Dalgetty, my imagination brightens, and my conception becomes clearer at every step which I take in his company, although it leads me many a weary mile away from the regular road, and forces me to leap hedge and ditch to get back into the route again. If I resist the temptation, as you advise me, my thoughts become prosy, flat, and dull ; I write painfully to myself, and under a consciousness of flagging which makes me flag still more ; the sunshine with which fancy had invested the incidents departs from them, and leaves everything dull and gloomy. I am no more the same author I was in my better mood than the dog in a wheel, condemned to go round and round for hours, is like the same dog merrily chasing his own tail, and gambolling in all the frolic of unrestrained freedom. In short, sir, on such occasions I think I am bewitched.

Captain. Nay, sir, if you plead sorcery, there is no more to be said : he must needs go whom the devil drives. And this, I suppose, sir, is the reason why you do not make the theatrical attempt to which you have been so often urged ?

Author. It may pass for one good reason for not writing a play, that I cannot form a plot. But the truth is, that the idea adopted by too favourable judges, of my having some aptitude for that department of poetry, has been much founded on those scraps of old plays which, being taken from a source inaccessible to collectors, they have hastily considered the offspring of my mother-wit. Now, the manner in which I became possessed of these fragments is so extraordinary that I cannot help telling it to you.

You must know that, some twenty years since, I went down to visit an old friend in Worcestershire, who had served with me in the ——— Dragoons.

Captain. Then you *have* served, sir?

Author. I have—or I have not, which signifies the same thing; captain is a good travelling name. I found my friend's house unexpectedly crowded with guests, and, as usual, was condemned—the mansion being an old one—to the *haunted apartment*. I have, as a great modern said, seen too many ghosts to believe in them, so betook myself seriously to my repose, lulled by the wind rustling among the lime-trees, the branches of which chequered the moonlight which fell on the floor through the diamonded casement, when, behold, a darker shadow interposed itself, and I beheld visibly on the floor of the apartment——

Captain. The White Lady of Avenel, I suppose? You have told the very story before.

Author. No—I beheld a female form, with mob-cap, bib, and apron, sleeves tucked up to the elbow, a dredging-box in the one hand, and in the other a sauce-ladle. I concluded, of course, that it was my friend's cook-maid walking in her sleep; and as I knew he had a value for Sally, who could toss a pancake with any girl in the country, I got up to conduct her safely to the door. But as I approached her, she said, Hold, sir! I am not what you take me for'—words which seemed so opposite to the circumstances, that I should not have much minded them, had it not been for the peculiarly hollow sound in which they were uttered. 'Know, then,' she said, in the same unearthly accents, 'that I am the spirit of Betty Barnes.' 'Who hanged herself for love of the stage-coachman,' thought I; 'this is a proper spot of work!' 'Of that unhappy Elizabeth or Betty Barnes, long cook-maid to Mr. Warburton, the painful collector, but ah! the too careless custodier, of the largest collection of ancient plays ever known—of most of which the titles only are left to gladden the Prolegomena of the Variorum Shakspeare. Yes, stranger, it was these ill-fated hands that consigned to grease and conflagration the scores of small quartos, which, did they now exist, would drive the whole Roxburghe Club out of their senses; it was these unhappy pickers and stealers that singed fat fowls and wiped dirty trenchers with the lost works of Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger, Jonson, Webster—what shall I say? even of Shakspeare himself!'

Like every dramatic antiquary, my ardent curiosity after some play named in the book of the Master of Revels had often been checked by finding the object of my research numbered amongst the holocaust of victims which this unhappy woman

INTRODUCTION TO THE

had sacrificed to the God of Good Cheer. It is no wonder then, that, like the Hermit of Parnell,

I broke the bands of fear and madly cried,
'You careless jade!' But scarce the words began,
When Betty brandish'd high her saucing-pan.

'Beware,' she said, 'you do not, by your ill-timed anger, cut off the opportunity I yet have to indemnify the world for the errors of my ignorance. In yonder coal-hole, not used for many a year, repose the few greasy and blackened fragments of the elder drama which were not totally destroyed. Do thou then——' Why, what do you stare at, captain! By my soul, it is true; as my friend Major Longbow says, 'What should I tell you a lie for?'

Captain. Lie, sir! Nay, Heaven forbid I should apply the word to a person so veracious. You are only inclined to chase your tail a little this morning, that's all. Had you not better reserve this legend to form an introduction to *Three Recovered Dramas*, or so?

Author. You are quite right; habit's a strange thing, my son. I had forgot whom I was speaking to. Yes, plays for the closet, not for the stage——

Captain. Right, and so you are sure to be acted; for the managers, while thousands of volunteers are desirous of serving them, are wonderfully partial to pressed men.

Author. I am a living witness, having been, like a second Laberius, made a dramatist whether I would or not. I believe my muse would be *Terrified*¹ into treading the stage, even if I should write a sermon.

Captain. Truly, if you did, I am afraid folks might make a farce of it; and, therefore, should you change your style, I will advise a volume of dramas like Lord Byron's.

Author. No, his lordship is a cut above me: I won't run my horse against his, if I can help myself. But there is my friend Allan has written just such a play as I might write myself, in a very sunny day, and with one of Bramah's extra patent-pens. I cannot make neat work without such appurtenances.

Captain. Do you mean Allan Ramsey?

Author. No, nor Barbara Allan either. I mean Allan Cunningham, who has just published his tragedy of *Sir Marmaduke*

¹ A jocular allusion to the Author's friend Daniel Terry, a celebrated comedian, who dramatised more than one of the Waverley Novels, which were brought on the stage with great success. Sir Walter himself might have been seen as a spectator, enjoying the performance as much as any one (*Laing*).

Maxwell, full of merry-making and murdering, kissing and cutting of throats, and passages which lead to nothing, and which are very pretty passages for all that. Not a glimpse of probability is there about the plot, but so much animation in particular passages, and such a vein of poetry through the whole, as I dearly wish I could infuse into my *Culinary Remains*, should I ever be tempted to publish them. With a popular impress, people would read and admire the beauties of Allan; as it is, they may perhaps only note his defects — or, what is worse, not note him at all. But never mind them, honest Allan; you are a credit to Caledonia for all that. There are some lyrical effusions of his, too, which you would do well to read, captain. 'It's hame, and it's hame,' is equal to Burns.

Captain. I will take the hint. The club at Kennaquhair are turned fastidious since Catalani visited the Abbey. My *Poortith Cauld* has been received both poorly and coldly, and *The Banks of Bonnie Doon* have been positively coughed down. *Tempora mutantur*.

Author. They cannot stand still, they will change with all of us. What then?

A man's a man for a' that.

But the hour of parting approaches.

Captain. You are determined to proceed then in your own system? Are you aware that an unworthy motive may be assigned for this rapid succession of publication? You will be supposed to work merely for the lucre of gain.

Author. Supposing that I did permit the great advantages which must be derived from success in literature to join with other motives in inducing me to come more frequently before the public, that emolument is the voluntary tax which the public pays for a certain species of literary amusement; it is extorted from no one, and paid, I presume, by those only who can afford it, and who receive gratification in proportion to the expense. If the capital sum which these volumes have put into circulation be a very large one, has it contributed to my indulgence only? or can I not say to hundreds, from honest Duncan the paper-manufacturer to the most snivelling of the printer's devils, 'Didst thou not share? Hadst thou not fifteen pence?' I profess I think our Modern Athens much obliged to me for having established such an extensive manufacture; and when universal suffrage comes in fashion, I intend to stand

for a seat in the House on the interest of all the unwashed artificers connected with literature.

Captain. This would be called the language of a calico manufacturer.

Author. Cant again, my dear son : there is lime in this sack, too ; nothing but sophistication in this world ! I do say it, in spite of Adam Smith and his followers, that a successful author is a productive labourer, and that his works constitute as effectual a part of the public wealth as that which is created by any other manufacture. If a new commodity, having an actually intrinsic and commercial value, be the result of the operation, why are the author's bales of books to be esteemed a less profitable part of the public stock than the goods of any other manufacturer ? I speak with reference to the diffusion of the wealth arising to the public, and the degree of industry which even such a trifling work as the present must stimulate and reward, before the volumes leave the publisher's shop. Without me it could not exist, and to this extent I am a benefactor to the country. As for my own emolument, it is won by my toil, and I account myself answerable to Heaven only for the mode in which I expend it. The candid may hope it is not all dedicated to selfish purposes ; and, without much pretensions to merit in him who disburses it, a part may 'wander, heaven-directed, to the poor.'

Captain. Yet it is generally held base to write from the mere motives of gain.

Author. It would be base to do so exclusively, or even to make it a principal motive for literary exertion. Nay, I will venture to say that no work of imagination, proceeding from the mere consideration of a certain sum of copy-money, ever did, or ever will, succeed. So the lawyer who pleads, the soldier who fights, the physician who prescribes, the clergyman — if such there be — who preaches, without any zeal for his profession, or without any sense of its dignity, and merely on account of the fee, pay, or stipend, degrade themselves to the rank of sordid mechanics. Accordingly, in the case of two of the learned faculties at least, their services are considered as unappreciable, and are acknowledged, not by any exact estimate of the services rendered, but by a *honorarium*, or voluntary acknowledgment. But let a client or patient make the experiment of omitting this little ceremony of the *honorarium*, which is *cense* to be a thing entirely out of consideration between them, and mark how the learned gentleman will look upon his

case. Cant set apart, it is the same thing with literary emolument. No man of sense, in any rank of life, is, or ought to be, above accepting a just recompense for his time, and a reasonable share of the capital which owes its very existence to his exertions. When Czar Peter wrought in the trenches, he took the pay of a common soldier; and nobles, statesmen, and divines, the most distinguished of their time, have not scorned to square accounts with their bookseller.

Captain (Sings.)

Oh, if it were a mean thing,
The gentles would not use it;
And if it were ungodly,
The clergy would refuse it.

Author. You say well. But no man of honour, genius, or spirit would make the mere love of gain the chief, far less the only, purpose of his labours. For myself, I am not displeased to find the game a winning one; yet while I pleased the public, I should probably continue it merely for the pleasure of playing; for I have felt as strongly as most folks that love of composition which is perhaps the strongest of all instincts, driving the author to the pen, the painter to the pallet, often without either the chance of fame or the prospect of reward. Perhaps I have said too much of this. I might, perhaps, with as much truth as most people, exculpate myself from the charge of being either of a greedy or mercenary disposition; but I am not, therefore, hypocrite enough to disclaim the ordinary motives, on account of which the whole world around me is toiling unremittingly, to the sacrifice of ease, comfort, health, and life. I do not affect the disinterestedness of that ingenious association of gentlemen mentioned by Goldsmith, who sold their magazine for sixpence a-piece, merely for their own amusement.

Captain. I have but one thing more to hint. The world say you will run yourself out.

Author. The world say true; and what then? When they dance no longer, I will no longer pipe; and I shall not want flappers enough to remind me of the apoplexy.

Captain. And what will become of us then, your poor family? We shall fall into contempt and oblivion.

Author. Like many a poor fellow, already overwhelmed with the number of his family, I cannot help going on to increase it. "Tis my vocation, Hal.' Such of you as deserve oblivion — perhaps the whole of you — may be consigned to it. At any

rate, you have been read in your day, which is more than can be said of some of your contemporaries of less fortune and more merit. They cannot say but that you *had* the crown. It is always something to have engaged the public attention for seven years. Had I only written *Waverley*, I should have long since been, according to the established phrase, 'the ingenious author of a novel much admired at the time.' I believe, on my soul, that the reputation of *Waverley* is sustained very much by the praises of those who may be inclined to prefer that tale to its successors.

Captain. You are willing, then, to barter future reputation for present popularity?

Author. *Meliora spero.* Horace himself expected not to survive in all his works; I may hope to live in some of mine. *Non omnis moriar.* It is some consolation to reflect that the best authors in all countries have been the most voluminous; and it has often happened that those who have been best received in their own time have also continued to be acceptable to posterity. I do not think so ill of the present generation as to suppose that its present favour necessarily infers future condemnation.

Captain. Were all to act on such principles, the public would be inundated.

Author. Once more, my dear son, beware of cant. You speak as if the public were obliged to read books merely because they are printed; your friends the booksellers would thank you to make the proposition good. The most serious grievance attending such inundations as you talk of is that they make rags dear. The multiplicity of publications does the present age no harm, and may greatly advantage that which is to succeed us.

Captain. I do not see how that is to happen.

Author. The complaints in the time of Elizabeth and James of the alarming fertility of the press were as loud as they are at present; yet look at the shore over which the inundation of that age flowed, and it resembles now the Rich Strand of the *Faërie Queene*—

Bestrew'd all with rich array,
Of pearl and precious stones of great assay;
And all the gravel mix'd with golden ore.

Believe me, that even in the most neglected works of the present age the next may discover treasures.

Captain. Some books will defy all alchemy.

Author. They will be but few in number ; since, as for writers who are possessed of no merit at all, unless indeed they publish their works at their own expense, like Sir Richard Blackmore, their power of annoying the public will be soon limited by the difficulty of finding undertaking booksellers.

Captain. You are incorrigible. Are there no bounds to your audacity ?

Author. There are the sacred and eternal boundaries of honour and virtue. My course is like the enchanted chamber of Britomart—

Where as she look'd about, she did behold
How over that same door was likewise writ,
Be Bold — Be Bold, and everywhere *Be Bold*.
Whereat she mused, and could not construe it ;
At last she spied at that room's upper end
Another iron door, on which was writ—
BE NOT TOO BOLD.

Captain. Well, you must take the risk of proceeding on your own principles.

Author. Do you act on yours, and take care you do not stay idling here till the dinner-hour is over. I will add this work to your patrimony, *valeat quantum*.

Here our dialogue terminated ; for a little sooty-faced Apollyon from the Canongate came to demand the proof-sheet on the part of Mr. M'Corkindale ;¹ and I heard Mr. C. rebuking Mr. F. in another compartment of the same labyrinth I have described for suffering any one to penetrate so far into the *penetralia* of their temple.

I leave it to you to form your own opinion concerning the import of this dialogue, and I cannot but believe I shall meet the wishes of our common parent in prefixing this letter to the work which it concerns.

I am, reverend and dear Sir,

Very sincerely and affectionately

Yours, etc. etc.

CUTHBERT CLUTTERBUCK.

KENNAQUHAIR, 1st April 1822.

¹ This painstaking man was for many years foreman in Ballantyne's printing-office (*Laing*),

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KENNAQUHAIR, 1st April 1822.

¹ This painstaking man was for many years foreman in Ballantyne's printing-office (*Lainy*),

THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL

CHAPTER I

Now Scot and English are agreed,
And Saunders hastes to cross the Tweed,
Where, such the splendours that attend him,
His very mother scarce had kend him.
His metamorphosis behold,
From Glasgow frieze to cloth of gold ;
His back-sword, with the iron hilt,
To rapier fairly hatch'd and gilt ;
Was ever seen a gallant braver ?
His very bonnet's grown a beaver.

The Reformation.

THE long-continued hostilities which had for centuries separated the south and the north divisions of the Island of Britain had been happily terminated by the succession of the pacific James I. to the English crown. But, although the united crown of England and Scotland was worn by the same individual, it required a long lapse of time, and the succession of more than one generation, ere the inveterate national prejudices which had so long existed betwixt the sister kingdoms were removed, and the subjects of either side of the Tweed brought to regard those upon the opposite bank as friends and as brethren.

These prejudices were, of course, most inveterate during the reign of King James. The English subjects accused him of partiality to those of his ancient kingdom ; while the Scots, with equal injustice, charged him with having forgotten the land of his nativity, and with neglecting those early friends to whose allegiance he had been so much indebted.

The temper of the King, peaceable even to timidity, inclined him perpetually to interfere as mediator between the contending factions, whose brawls disturbed the court. But, notwithstanding all his precautions, historians have recorded many

instances where the mutual hatred of two nations, who, after being enemies for a thousand years, had been so very recently united, broke forth with a fury which menaced a general convulsion; and, spreading from the highest to the lowest classes, as it occasioned debates in council and parliament, factions in the court, and duels among the gentry, was no less productive of riots and brawls amongst the lower orders.

While these heart-burnings were at the highest, there flourished in the city of London an ingenious, but whimsical and self-opinioned, mechanic, much devoted to abstract studies, David Ramsay¹ by name, who, whether recommended by his great skill in his profession, as the courtiers alleged, or, as was murmured among his neighbours, by his birthplace in the good town of Dalkeith, near Edinburgh, held in James's household the post of maker of watches and horologes to his Majesty. He scorned not, however, to keep open shop within Temple Bar, a few yards to the eastward of St. Dunstan's Church.

The shop of a London tradesman at that time, as it may be supposed, was something very different from those we now see in the same locality. The goods were exposed to sale in cases, only, defended from the weather by a covering of canvas, and the whole resembled the stalls and booths now erected for the temporary accommodation of dealers at a country fair, rather than the established emporium of a respectable citizen. But most of the shopkeepers of note, and David Ramsay amongst others, had their booth connected with a small apartment which opened backward from it, and bore the same resemblance to the front shop that Robinson Crusoe's cavern did to the tent which he erected before it. To this Master Ramsay was often accustomed to retreat to the labour of his abstruse calculations; for he aimed at improvement and discoveries in his own art, and sometimes pushed his researches, like Napier and other mathematicians of the period, into abstract science. When thus engaged, he left the outer posts of his commercial establishment to be maintained by two stout-bodied and strong-voiced apprentices, who kept up the cry of, 'What d' ye lack? — what d' ye lack?' accompanied with the appropriate recommendations of the articles in which they dealt. This direct and personal application for custom to those who chanced to pass by is now, we believe, limited to Monmouth Street (if it still exists even in that repository of ancient garments), under the guardianship of the scattered remnant of

¹ See Note 4.

Israel. But at the time we are speaking of it was practised alike by Jew and Gentile, and served, instead of all our present newspaper puffs and advertisements, to solicit the attention of the public in general, and of friends in particular, to the unrivalled excellence of the goods which they offered to sale, upon such easy terms that it might fairly appear that the venders had rather a view to the general service of the public than to their own particular advantage.

The verbal proclaimers of the excellence of their commodities had this advantage over those who, in the present day, use the public papers for the same purpose, that they could in many cases adapt their address to the peculiar appearance and apparent taste of the passengers. (This, as we have said, was also the case in Monmouth Street in our remembrance. We have ourselves been reminded of the deficiencies of our femoral habiliments, and exhorted upon that score to fit ourselves more becomingly; but this is a digression.) This direct and personal mode of invitation to customers became, however, a dangerous temptation to the young wags who were employed in the task of solicitation during the absence of the principal person interested in the traffic; and, confiding in their numbers and civic union, the 'prentices of London were often seduced into taking liberties with the passengers, and exercising their wit at the expense of those whom they had no hopes of converting into customers by their eloquence. If this were resented by any act of violence, the inmates of each shop were ready to pour forth in succour; and in the words of an old song which Dr. Johnson was used to hum—

Up then rose the 'prentices all,
Living in London, both proper and tall.

Desperate riots often arose on such occasions, especially when the Templars, or other youths connected with the aristocracy, were insulted, or conceived themselves to be so. Upon such occasions, bare steel was frequently opposed to the clubs of the citizens, and death sometimes ensued on both sides. The tardy and inefficient police of the time had no other resource than by the alderman of the ward calling out the householders, and putting a stop to the strife by overpowering numbers, as the Capulets and Montagues are separated upon the stage.

At the period when such was the universal custom of the most respectable, as well as the most inconsiderable, shopkeepers

in London, David Ramsay, on the evening to which we solicit the attention of the reader, retiring to more abstruse and private labours, left the administration of his outer shop, or booth, to the aforesaid sharp-witted, active, able-bodied, and well-voiced apprentices, namely, Jenkin Vincent and Frank Tunstall.

Vincent had been educated at the excellent foundation of Christ's Church Hospital, and was bred, therefore, as well as born, a Londoner, with all the acuteness, address, and audacity which belong peculiarly to the youth of a metropolis. He was now about twenty years old, short in stature, but remarkably strong made, eminent for his feats upon holidays at football and other gymnastic exercises; scarce rivalled in the broadsword play, though hitherto only exercised in the form of single-stick. He knew every lane, blind alley, and sequestered court of the ward better than his catechism; was alike active in his master's affairs and in his own adventures of fun and mischief; and so managed matters that the credit he acquired by the former bore him out, or at least served for his apology, when the latter propensity led him into scrapes, of which, however, it is but fair to state that they had hitherto inferred nothing mean or discreditable. Some aberrations there were, which David Ramsay, his master, endeavoured to reduce to regular order when he discovered them, and others which he winked at, supposing them to answer the purpose of the escapement of a watch, which disposes of a certain quantity of the extra power of that mechanical impulse which puts the whole in motion.

The physiognomy of Jin Vin — by which abbreviation he was familiarly known through the ward — corresponded with the sketch we have given of his character. His head, upon which his 'prentice's flat cap was generally flung in a careless and oblique fashion, was closely covered with thick hair of raven black, which curled naturally and closely, and would have grown to great length but for the modest custom enjoined by his state of life, and strictly enforced by his master, which compelled him to keep it short-cropped — not unreluctantly, as he looked with envy on the flowing ringlets in which the courtiers and aristocratic students of the neighbouring Temple began to indulge themselves, as marks of superiority and of gentility. Vincent's eyes were deep set in his head, of a strong vivid black, full of fire, roguery, and intelligence, and conveying a humorous expression, even while he was uttering the usual small-talk of his trade, as if he ridiculed those who were

disposed to give any weight to his commonplaces. He had address enough, however, to add little touches of his own, which gave a turn of drollery even to this ordinary routine of the booth; and the alacrity of his manner, his ready and obvious wish to oblige, his intelligence and civility, when he thought civility necessary, made him a universal favourite with his master's customers. His features were far from regular, for his nose was flattish, his mouth tending to the larger size, and his complexion inclining to be more dark than was then thought consistent with masculine beauty. But, in despite of his having always breathed the air of a crowded city, his complexion had the ruddy and manly expression of redundant health; his turned-up nose gave an air of spirit and raillery to what he said, and seconded the laugh of his eyes; and his wide mouth was garnished with a pair of well-formed and well-coloured lips, which, when he laughed, disclosed a range of teeth strong and well set, and as white as the very pearl. Such was the elder apprentice of David Ramsay, memory's monitor, watchmaker, and constructor of horologes, to his most sacred Majesty James I.

Jenkin's companion was the younger apprentice, though, perhaps, he might be the elder of the two in years. At any rate, he was of a much more staid and composed temper. Francis Tunstall was of that ancient and proud descent who claimed the style of the 'unstained'; because, amid the various chances of the long and bloody wars of the Roses, they had, with undeviating faith, followed the house of Lancaster, to which they had originally attached themselves. The meanest sprig of such a tree attached importance to the root from which it derived itself; and Tunstall was supposed to nourish in secret a proportion of that family pride which had extorted tears from his widowed and almost indigent mother when she saw herself obliged to consign him to a line of life inferior, as her prejudices suggested, to the course held by his progenitors. Yet, with all this aristocratic prejudice, his master found the well-born youth more docile, regular, and strictly attentive to his duty than his far more active and alert comrade. Tunstall also gratified his master by the particular attention which he seemed disposed to bestow on the abstract principles of science connected with the trade which he was bound to study, the limits of which were daily enlarged with the increase of mathematical science.

Vincent beat his companion beyond the distance-post in

everything like the practical adaptation of thorough practice in the dexterity of hand necessary to execute the mechanical branches of the art, and double-distanced him in all respecting the commercial affairs of the shop. Still David Ramsay was wont to say that, if Vincent knew how to do a thing the better of the two, Tunstall was much better acquainted with the principles on which it ought to be done; and he sometimes objected to the latter, that he knew critical excellence too well ever to be satisfied with practical mediocrity.

The disposition of Tunstall was shy, as well as studious; and, though perfectly civil and obliging, he never seemed to feel himself in his place while he went through the duties of the shop. He was tall and handsome, with fair hair, and well-formed limbs, good features, well-opened light blue eyes, a straight Grecian nose, and a countenance which expressed both good-humour and intelligence, but qualified by a gravity unsuitable to his years, and which almost amounted to dejection. He lived on the best terms with his companion, and readily stood by him whenever he was engaged in any of the frequent skirmishes which, as we have already observed, often disturbed the city of London about this period. But, though Tunstall was allowed to understand quarter-staff (the weapon of the North country) in a superior degree, and though he was naturally both strong and active, his interference in such affrays seemed always matter of necessity; and, as he never voluntarily joined either their brawls or their sports, he held a far lower place in the opinion of the youth of the ward than his hearty and active friend Jin Vin. Nay, had it not been for the interest made for his comrade by the intercession of Vincent, Tunstall would have stood some chance of being altogether excluded from the society of his contemporaries of the same condition, who called him, in scorn, the Cavaliero Cuddy and the Gentle Tunstall. On the other hand, the lad himself, deprived of the fresh air in which he had been brought up, and foregoing the exercise to which he was formerly accustomed, while the inhabitant of his native mansion, lost gradually the freshness of his complexion, and, without showing any symptoms of disease, grew more thin and pale as he grew older, and at length exhibited the appearance of indifferent health, without anything of the habits and complaints of an invalid, excepting a disposition to avoid society, and to spend his leisure time in private study, rather than mingle in the sports of his companions, or even resort to the theatres, then the general rendezvous of his class; where,

according to high authority, they fought for half-bitten apples, cracked nuts, and filled the upper gallery with their clamours.

Such were the two youths who called David Ramsay master; and with both of whom he used to fret from morning till night, as their peculiarities interfered with his own, or with the quiet and beneficial course of his traffic.

Upon the whole, however, the youths were attached to their master, and he, a good-natured, though an absent and whimsical man, was scarce less so to them; and, when a little warmed with wine at an occasional junketing, he used to boast, in his northern dialect, of his 'twa bonny lads, and the looks that the court ladies threw at them, when visiting his shop in their caroches, when on a frolic into the city.' But David Ramsay never failed, at the same time, to draw up his own tall, thin, lathy skeleton, extend his lean jaws into an alarming grin, and indicate, by a nod of his yard-long visage and a twinkle of his little grey eye, that there might be more faces in Fleet Street worth looking at than those of Frank and Jenkin.

His old neighbour, Widow Simmons, the sempstress, who had served, in her day, the very tip-top revellers of the Temple with ruffs, cuffs, and bands, distinguished more deeply the sort of attention paid by the females of quality who so regularly visited David Ramsay's shop to its inmates. 'The boy Frank,' she admitted, 'used to attract the attention of the young ladies, as having something gentle and downcast in his looks; but then he could not better himself, for the poor youth had not a word to throw at a dog. Now Jin Vin was so full of his jibes and his jeers, and so willing, and so ready, and so serviceable, and so mannerly all the while, with a step that sprung like a buck's in Epping Forest, and his eye that twinkled as black as a gipsy's, that no woman who knew the world would make a comparison betwixt the lads. As for poor neighbour Ramsay himself, the man,' she said, 'was a civil neighbour, and a learned man, doubtless, and might be a rich man if he had common sense to back his learning; and doubtless; for a Scot, neighbour Ramsay was nothing of a bad man, but he was so constantly grimed with smoke, gilded with brass filings, and smeared with lamp-black and oil, that Dame Simmons judged it would require his whole shopful of watches to induce any feasible woman to touch the said neighbour Ramsay with anything save a pair of tongs.'

A still higher authority, Dame Ursula, wife to Benjamin Suddlechop, the barber, was of exactly the same opinion.

Such were, in natural qualities and public estimation, the

two youths who, in a fine April day, having first rendered their dutiful service and attendance on the table of their master and his daughter, at their dinner at one o'clock — Such, O ye lads of London, was the severe discipline undergone by your predecessors! — and having regaled themselves upon the fragments, in company with two female domestics, one a cook and maid of all work, the other called Mistress Margaret's maid, now relieved their master in the duty of the outward shop; and, agreeably to the established custom, were soliciting, by their entreaties and recommendations of their master's manufacture, the attention and encouragement of the passengers.

In this species of service it may be easily supposed that Jenkin Vincent left his more reserved and bashful comrade far in the background. The latter could only articulate with difficulty, and as an act of duty which he was rather ashamed of discharging, the established words of form — 'What d'ye lack? What d'ye lack? Clocks — watches — barnacles? What d'ye lack? Watches — clocks — barnacles? What d'ye lack, sir? What d'ye lack, madam? Barnacles — watches — clocks?'

But this dull and dry iteration, however varied by diversity of verbal arrangement, sounded flat when mingled with the rich and recommendatory oratory of the bold-faced, deep-mouthed, and ready-witted Jenkin Vincent. 'What d'ye lack, noble sir? What d'ye lack, beauteous madam?' he said, in a tone at once bold and soothing, which often was so applied as both to gratify the persons addressed and to excite a smile from other hearers. 'God bless your reverence,' to a beneficed clergyman; 'the Greek and Hebrew have harmed your reverence's eyes. Buy a pair of David Ramsay's barnacles. The King — God bless his sacred Majesty! — never reads Hebrew or Greek without them.'

'Are you well advised of that?' said a fat parson from the Vale of Evesham. 'Nay, if the head of the church wears them — God bless his sacred Majesty! — I will try what they can do for me; for I have not been able to distinguish one Hebrew letter from another since — I cannot remember the time — when I had a bad fever. Choose me a pair of his most sacred Majesty's own wearing, my good youth.'

'This is a pair, and please your reverence,' said Jenkin, producing a pair of spectacles which he touched with an air of great deference and respect, 'which his most blessed Majesty placed this day three weeks on his own blessed nose; and would have kept them for his own sacred use, but that the setting

being, as your reverence sees, of the purest jet, was, as his sacred Majesty was pleased to say, fitter for a bishop than for a secular prince.'

'His sacred Majesty the King,' said the worthy divine, 'was ever a very Daniel in his judgment. Give me the barnacles, my good youth, and who can say what nose they may bestride in two years hence? Our reverend brother of Gloucester waxes in years.' He then pulled out his purse, paid for the spectacles, and left the shop with even a more important step than that which had paused to enter it.

'For shame,' said Tunstall to his companion; 'these glasses will never suit one of his years.'

'You are a fool, Frank,' said Vincent, in reply; 'had the good doctor wished glasses to read with he would have tried them before buying. He does not want to look through them himself, and these will serve the purpose of being looked at by other folks as well as the best magnifiers in the shop. What d'ye lack?' he cried, resuming his solicitations. 'Mirrors for your toilette, my pretty madam; your head-gear is something awry — pity, since it is so well fancied.' The woman stopped and bought a mirror. 'What d'ye lack? — a watch, Master Sergeant — a watch that will go as long as a lawsuit, as steady and true as your own eloquence?'

'Hold your peace, sir,' answered the Knight of the Coif, who was disturbed by Vin's address whilst in deep consultation with an eminent attorney — 'hold your peace! You are the loudest-tongued varlet betwixt the Devil's Tavern and Guildhall.'

'A watch,' reiterated the undaunted Jenkin, 'that shall not lose thirteen minutes in a thirteen years' lawsuit. He's out of hearing. A watch with four wheels and a bar-movement. A watch that shall tell you, Master Poet, how long the patience of the audience will endure your next piece at the Black Bull.' The bard laughed, and fumbled in the pocket of his slops till he chanced into a corner, and fairly caught, a small piece of coin.

'Here is a tester to cherish thy wit, good boy,' he said.

'Gramercy,' said Vin; 'at the next play of yours I will bring down a set of roaring boys that shall make all the critics in the pit and the gallants on the stage civil, or else the curtain shall smoke for it.'

'Now, that I call mean,' said Tunstall, 'to take the poor rhymer's money, who has so little left behind.'

'You are an owl once again,' said Vincent; 'if he has nothing left to buy cheese and radishes, he will only dine a day

the sooner with some patron or some player, for that is his fate five days out of the seven. It is unnatural that a poet should pay for his own pot of beer; I will drink his tester for him, to save him from such shame; and when his third night comes round he shall have pennyworths for his coin, I promise you. But here comes another-guess customer. Look at that strange fellow; see how he gapes at every shop, as if he would swallow the wares. Oh! St. Dunstan has caught his eye; pray God he swallow not the images. See how he stands astonished, as old Adam and Eve ply their ding-dong! Come, Frank, thou art a scholar: construe me that same fellow, with his blue cap with a cock's feather in it, to show he's of gentle blood, God wot, his grey eyes, his yellow-hair, his sword with a ton of iron in the handle, his grey, threadbare cloak, his step like a Frenchman, his look like a Spaniard, a book at his girdle, and a broad dudgeon-dagger on the other side to show him half-pedant, half-bully. How call you that pageant, Frank?

'A raw Scotsman,' said Tunstall; 'just come up, I suppose, to help the rest of his countrymen to gnaw Old England's bones: a palmer-worm, I reckon, to devour what the locust has spared.'

'Even so, Frank,' answered Vincent; 'just as the poet sings sweetly—

In Scotland he was born and bred,
And, though a beggar, must be fed.'

'Hush!' said Tunstall, 'remember our master.'

'Pshaw!' answered his mercurial companion; 'he knows on which side his bread is buttered, and I warrant you has not lived so long among Englishmen, and by Englishmen, to quarrel with us for bearing an English mind. But see, our Scot has done gazing at St. Dunstan's, and comes our way. By this light, a proper lad and a sturdy, in spite of freckles and sun-burning. He comes nearer still; I will have at him.'

'And if you do,' said his comrade, 'you may get a broken head: he looks not as if he would carry coals.'

'A fig for your threat,' said Vincent, and instantly addressed the stranger, 'Buy a watch, most noble northern thane—buy a watch, to count the hours of plenty since the blessed moment you left Berwick behind you. Buy barnacles, to see the English gold lies ready for your gripe. Buy what you will, you shall have credit for three days; for, were your pockets as bare as Father Fergus's, you are a Scot in London, and you will be stocked in that time.' The stranger looked sternly at the wag-

gish apprentice, and seemed to grasp his cudgel in rather a menacing fashion. 'Buy physic,' said the undaunted Vincent, 'if you will buy neither time nor light — physic for a proud stomach, sir, — there is a 'pothecary's shop on the other side of the way.'

Here the probationary disciple of Galen, who stood at his master's door in his flat cap and canvas sleeves, with a large wooden pestle in his hand, took up the ball which was flung to him by Jenkin, with, 'What d'ye lack, sir? Buy a choice Caledonian salve, *Flos sulphur. cum butyro quant. suff.*'

'To be taken after a gentle rubbing-down with an English oaken towel,' said Vincent.

The bonny Scot had given full scope to the play of this small artillery of city wit, by halting his stately pace and viewing grimly first the one assailant and then the other, as if menacing either repartee or more violent revenge. But phlegm or prudence got the better of his indignation, and tossing his head as one who valued not the raillery to which he had been exposed, he walked down Fleet Street, pursued by the horse-laugh of his tormentors.

'The Scot will not fight till he sees his own blood,' said Tunstall, whom his north of England extraction had made familiar with all manner of proverbs against those who lay yet farther north than himself.

'Faith, I know not,' said Jenkin; 'he looks dangerous, that fellow: he will hit some one over the noddle before he goes far. Hark! — hark! they are rising.'

Accordingly, the well-known cry of 'Prentices — prentices! Clubs — clubs!' now rang along Fleet Street; and Jenkin, snatching up his weapon, which lay beneath the counter ready at the slightest notice, and calling to Tunstall to take his bat and follow, leaped over the hatch-door which protected the outer shop, and ran as fast as he could towards the affray, echoing the cry as he ran, and elbowing, or shoving aside, whoever stood in his way. His comrade, first calling to his master to give an eye to the shop, followed Jenkin's example, and ran after him as fast as he could, but with more attention to the safety and convenience of others; while old David Ramsay, with hands and eyes uplifted, a green apron before him, and a glass which he had been polishing thrust into his bosom, came forth to look after the safety of his goods and chattels, knowing, by old experience, that, when the cry of 'Clubs' once arose, he would have little aid on the part of his apprentices.

CHAPTER II

This, sir, is one among the seignory,
Has wealth at will, and will to use his wealth,
And wit to increase it. Marry, his worst folly
Lies in a thriftless sort of charity,
That goes a-gadding sometimes after objects
Which wise men will not see when thrust upon them.

The Old Couple.

THE ancient gentleman bustled about his shop, in pettish displeasure at being summoned hither so hastily, to the interruption of his more abstract studies; and, unwilling to renounce the train of calculation which he had put in progress, he mingled whimsically with the fragments of the arithmetical operation his oratory to the passengers and angry reflections on his idle apprentices. 'What d'ye lack, sir? Madam, what d'ye lack — clocks for hall or table — night-watches — day-watches? Locking wheel being 48 — the power of retort 8 — the striking pins are 48 — What d'ye lack, honoured sir? — The quotient — the multiplicand — That the knaves should have gone out at this blessed minute! — the acceleration being at the rate of 5 minutes, 55 seconds, 53 thirds, 59 fourths — I will switch them both when they come back — I will, by the bones of the immortal Napier!'

Here the vexed philosopher was interrupted by the entrance of a grave citizen of a most respectable appearance, who, saluting him familiarly by the name of 'Davie, my old acquaintance,' demanded what had put him so much out of sorts, and gave him at the same time a cordial grasp of his hand.

The stranger's dress was, though grave, rather richer than usual. His panned hose were of black velvet, lined with purple silk, which garniture appeared at the slashes. His doublet was of purple cloth, and his short cloak of black velvet, to correspond with his hose; and both were adorned with a great number of small silver buttons richly wrought in filigree. A triple chain of gold hung round his neck; and, in place of a sword or dagger, he wore at his belt an ordinary knife for the



GEORGE HERIOT, THE "KING'S JEWELLER."
From a painting by John Scougall, now in Heriot's Hospital.

purpose of the table, with a small silver case, which appeared to contain writing-materials. He might have seemed some secretary or clerk engaged in the service of the public, only that his low, flat, and unadorned cap, and his well-blackened, shining shoes, indicated that he belonged to the city. He was a well-made man, about the middle size, and seemed firm in health, though advanced in years. His looks expressed sagacity and good-humour; and the air of respectability which his dress announced was well supported by his clear eye, ruddy cheek, and grey hair. He used the Scottish idiom in his first address, but in such a manner that it could hardly be distinguished whether he was passing upon his friend a sort of jocose mockery or whether it was his own native dialect, for his ordinary discourse had little provincialism.

In answer to the queries of his respectable friend, Ramsay groaned heavily, answering by echoing back the question, 'What ails me, Master George? Why, everything ails me! I profess to you that a man may as well live in Fairyland as in the ward of Farringdon Without. My apprentices are turned into mere goblins: they appear and disappear like spunkies, and have no more regularity in them than a watch without a scapement. If there is a ball to be tossed up, or a bullock to be driven mad or a quean to be ducked for scolding, or a head to be broken, Jenkin is sure to be at the one end or the other of it, and then away skips Francis Tunstall for company. I think the prize-fighters, bear-leaders, and mountebanks are in a league against me, my dear friend, and that they pass my house ten times for any other in the city. Here's an Italian fellow come over, too, that they call Punchinello; and, altogether——'

'Well,' interrupted Master George, 'but what is all this to the present case?'

'Why,' replied Ramsay, 'here has been a cry of thieves or murder—I hope that will prove the least of it amongst these English pock-pudding swine!—and I have been interrupted in the deepest calculation ever mortal man plunged into, Master George.'

'What, man!' replied Master George, 'you must take patience. You are a man that deals in time, and can make it go fast and slow at pleasure; you, of all the world, have least reason to complain if a little of it be lost now and then. But here come your boys, and bringing in a slain man betwixt them, I think: here has been serious mischief, I am afraid.'

'The more mischief the better sport,' said the crabbed old

watchmaker. 'I am blithe, though, that it's neither of the two loons themselves. What are ye bringing a corpse here for, ye fause villains?' he added, addressing the two apprentices, who, at the head of a considerable mob of their own class, some of whom bore evident marks of a recent fray, were carrying the body betwixt them.

'He is not dead yet, sir,' answered Tunstall.

'Carry him into the apothecary's, then,' replied his master. 'D'ye think I can set a man's life in motion again, as if he were a clock or a timepiece?'

'For Godsake, old friend,' said his acquaintance, 'let us have him here at the nearest; he seems only in a swoon.'

'A swoon!' said Ramsay, 'and what business had he to swoon in the streets? Only, if it will oblige my friend Master George, I would take in all the dead men in St. Dunstan's parish. Call Sam Porter to look after the shop.'

So saying, the stunned man, being the identical Scotsman who had passed a short time before amidst the jeers of the apprentices, was carried into the back shop of the artist, and there placed in an armed chair till the apothecary from over the way came to his assistance. This gentleman, as sometimes happens to those of the learned professions, had rather more lore than knowledge, and began to talk of the sinciput and occiput, and cerebrum and cerebellum, until he exhausted David Ramsay's brief stock of patience.

'Bell-um! bell-ell-um!' he repeated, with great indignation. 'What signify all the bells in London, if you do not put a plaster on the chield's crown?'

Master George, with better-directed zeal, asked the apothecary whether bleeding might not be useful; when, after humming and hawing for a moment, and being unable, upon the spur of the occasion, to suggest anything else, the man of pharmacy observed, that 'it would, at all events, relieve the brain or cerebrum, in case there was a tendency to the deposition of any extravasated blood, to operate as a pressure upon that delicate organ.' Fortunately he was adequate to performing this operation; and, being powerfully aided by Jenkin Vincent (who was learned in all cases of broken heads) with plenty of cold water and a little vinegar, applied according to the scientific method practised by the bottle-holders in a modern ring, the man began to raise himself on his chair, draw his cloak tightly around him, and look about like one who struggles to recover sense and recollection.

'He had better lie down on the bed in the little back closet,' said Mr. Ramsay's visitor, who seemed perfectly familiar with the accommodations which the house afforded.

'He is welcome to my share of the truckle,' said Jenkin, for in the said back closet were the two apprentices accommodated in one truckle-bed; 'I can sleep under the counter.'

'So can I,' said Tunstall, 'and the poor fellow can have the bed all night.'

'Sleep,' said the apothecary, 'is, in the opinion of Galen, a restorative and febrifuge, and is most naturally taken in a truckle-bed.'

'Where a better cannot be come by,' said Master George; 'but these are two honest lads, to give up their beds so willingly. Come, off with his cloak, and let us bear him to his couch. I will send for Dr. Irving, the king's chirurgeon; he does not live far off, and that shall be my share of the Samaritan's duty, neighbour Ramsay.'

'Well, sir,' said the apothecary, 'it is at your pleasure to send for other advice, and I shall not object to consult with Dr. Irving or any other medical person of skill, neither to continue to furnish such drugs as may be needful from my pharmacopœia. However, whatever Dr. Irving, who, I think, hath had his degrees in Edinburgh, or Dr. Any-one-Beside, be he Scottish or English, may say to the contrary, sleep, taken timeously, is a febrifuge, or sedative, and also a restorative.'

He muttered a few more learned words, and concluded by informing Ramsay's friend, in English far more intelligible than his Latin, that he would look to him as his paymaster for medicines, care, and attendance, furnished, or to be furnished, to this party unknown.

Master George only replied by desiring him to send his bill for what he had already to charge, and to give himself no farther trouble unless he heard from him. The pharmacopolist, who, from discoveries made by the cloak falling a little aside, had no great opinion of the faculty of this chance patient to make reimbursement, had no sooner seen his case espoused by a substantial citizen than he showed some reluctance to quit possession of it, and it needed a short and stern hint from Master George, which, with all his good-humour, he was capable of expressing when occasion required, to send to his own dwelling this Esculapius of Temple Bar.

When they were rid of Mr. Raredrench, the charitable efforts of Jenkin and Francis to divest the patient of his long grey

cloak were firmly resisted on his own part. 'My life suner — my life suner,' he muttered in indistinct murmurs. In these efforts to retain his upper garment, which was too tender to resist much handling, it gave way at length with a loud rent, which almost threw the patient into a second syncope, and he sat before them in his under garments, the looped and repaired wretchedness of which moved at once pity and laughter, and had certainly been the cause of his unwillingness to resign the mantle, which, like the virtue of charity, served to cover so many imperfections.

The man himself cast his eyes on his poverty-struck garb, and seemed so much ashamed of the disclosure that, muttering between his teeth that he would be too late for an appointment, he made an effort to rise and leave the shop, which was easily prevented by Jenkin Vincent and his comrade, who, at the nod of Master George, laid hold of and detained him in his chair. The patient next looked round him for a moment, and then said faintly, in his broad, northern language — 'What sort of usage ca' ye this, gentlemen, to a stranger a sojourner in your town? Ye hae broken my head, ye hae riven my cloak, and now ye are for restraining my personal liberty! They were wiser than me,' he said, after a moment's pause, 'that counselled me to wear my warst claithing in the streets of London; and, if I could have got any things warse than these mean garments ('Which would have been very difficult,' said Jin Vin, in a whisper to his companion), they would have been e'en ower gude for the grips o' men sae little acquainted with the laws of honest civility.'

'To say the truth,' said Jenkin, unable to forbear any longer, although the discipline of the times prescribed to those in his situation a degree of respectful distance and humility in the presence of parents, masters, or seniors of which the present age has no idea — 'to say the truth, the good gentleman's clothes look as if they would not brook much handling.'

'Hold your peace, young man,' said Master George, with a tone of authority: 'never mock the stranger or the poor. The black ox has not trode on your foot yet; you know not what lands you may travel in, or what clothes you may wear, before you die.'

Vincent held down his head and stood rebuked; but the stranger did not accept the apology which was made for him.

'I *am* a stranger, sir,' said he, 'that is certain; though methinks that, being such, I have been somewhat familiarly

treated in this town of yours; but, as for my being poor, I think I need not be charged with poverty till I seek siller of somebody.'

'The dear country all over,' said Master George, in a whisper, to David Ramsay — 'pride and poverty.'

But David had taken out his tablets and silver pen, and, deeply immersed in calculations, in which he rambled over all the terms of arithmetic, from the simple unit to millions, billions, and trillions, neither heard nor answered the observation of his friend, who, seeing his abstraction, turned again to the Scot.

'I fancy now, Jockey, if a stranger were to offer you a noble, you would chuck it back at his head?'

'Not if I could do him honest service for it, sir,' said the Scot; 'I am willing to do what I may to be useful, though I come of an honourable house, and may be said to be in a sort indifferently weel provided for.'

'Ay!' said the interrogator, 'and what house may claim the honour of your descent?'

'An ancient coat belongs to it, as the play says,' whispered Vincent to his companion.

'Come, Jockey, out with it,' continued Master George, observing that the Scot, as usual with his countrymen when asked a blunt, straightforward question, took a little time before answering it.

'I am no more Jockey, sir, than you are John,' said the stranger, as if offended at being addressed by a name which at that time was used, as Sawney now is, for a general appellative of the Scottish nation. 'My name, if you must know it, is Richie Moniplies; and I come of the old and honourable house of Castle Collop, weel kend at the West Port of Edinburgh.'

'What is that you call the West Port?' proceeded the interrogator.

'Why, an it like your honour,' said Richie, who now, having recovered his senses sufficiently to observe the respectable exterior of Master George, threw more civility into his manner than at first, 'the West Port is a gate of our city, as yonder brick arches at Whitehall form the entrance of the King's palace here, only that the West Port is of stonern work, and mair decorated with architecture and the policy of bigging.'

'Nouns, man, the Whitehall gateways were planned by the great Holbein,' answered Master George; 'I suspect your accident has jumbled your brains, my good friend. I suppose you

is as much grass grows where my father's stall stood as might have been a good bite for the beasts he was used to kill.'

'It is even too true,' said Master George; 'and while we make fortunes here, our old neighbours and their families are starving at home. This should be thought upon oftener. And how came you by that broken head, Richie? tell me honestly.'

'Troth, sir, I'se no lee about the matter,' answered Moniplies. 'I was coming along the street here, and ilk ane was at me with their jests and roguery. So I thought to mysell, "Ye are ower mony for me to mell with; but let me catch ye in Barford's Park, or at the fit of the Vennel, I could gar some of ye sing another sang." Sae ae auld hirpling deevil of a potter behoved just to step in my way and offer me a pig, as he said, just to put my Scotch ointment in, and I gave him a push, as but natural, and the tottering deevil couped ower amang his ain pigs, and damaged a score of them. And then the reird raise, and hadna these twa gentlemen helped me out of it, murdered I suld hae been, without remeid. And as it was, just when they got haud of my arm to have me out of the fray, I got the lick that donnerit me from a left-handed lighterman.'

Master George looked to the apprentices as if to demand the truth of the story.

'It is just as he says, sir,' replied Jenkin; 'only I heard nothing about pigs. The people said he had broke some crockery, and that—I beg pardon, sir—nobody could thrive within the kenning of a Scot.'

'Well, no matter what they said, you were an honest fellow to help the weaker side. And you, sirrah,' continued Master George, addressing his countryman, 'will call at my house to-morrow morning, agreeable to this direction.'

'I will wait upon your honour,' said the Scot, bowing very low; 'that is, if my honourable master will permit me.'

'Thy master?' said George. 'Hast thou any other master save Want, whose livery you say you wear?'

'Troth, in one sense, if it please your honour, I serve twa masters,' said Richie; 'for both my master and me are slaves to that same beldam, whom we thought to show our heels to by coming off from Scotland. So that you see, sir, I hold in a sort of black ward tenure, as we call it in our country, being the servant of a servant.'

'And what is your master's name?' said George; and observing that Richie hesitated, he added, 'Nay, do not tell me, if it is a secret.'

'A secret that there is little use in keeping,' said Richie; 'only ye ken that our northern stomachs are ower proud to call in witnesses to our distress. No that my master is in mair than present pinch, sir,' he added, looking towards the two English apprentices, 'having a large sum in the royal treasury—that is,' he continued, in a whisper to Master George, 'the King is owing him a lot of siller; but it's ill getting at it, it's like. My master is the young Lord Glenvarloch'

Master George testified surprise at the name. 'You one of the young Lord Glenvarloch's followers, and in such a condition!'

'Troth, and I am all the followers he has, for the present that is; and blithe wad I be if he were muckle better aff than I am, though I were to bide as I am.'

'I have seen his father with four gentlemen and ten lackeys at his heels,' said Master George, 'rustling in their laces and velvets. Well, this is a changeful world, but there is a better beyond it. The good old house of Glenvarloch, that stood by king and country five hundred years!'

'Your honour may say a thousand,' said the follower.

'I will say what I know to be true, friend,' said the citizen; 'and not a word more. You seem well recovered now; can you walk?'

'Bravely, sir,' said Richie; 'it was but a bit dover. I was bred at the West Port, and my cantle will stand a clour wad bring a stot down.'

'Where does your master lodge?'

'We pit up, an it like your honour,' replied the Scot, 'in a sma' house at the fit of ane of the wynds that gang down to the water-side, with a decent man, John Christie, a ship-chandler, as they ca't. His father came from Dundee. I wotna the name of the wynd, but it's right anent the mickle kirk yonder; and your honour will mind that we pass only by our family name of simple Mr. Nigel Olifaunt, as keeping ourselves retired for the present, though in Scotland we be called the Lord Nigel.'

'It is wisely done of your master,' said the citizen. 'I will find out your lodgings, though your direction be none of the clearest.' So saying, and slipping a piece of money at the same time into Richie Moniplies's hand, he bade him hasten home, and get into no more affrays.

'I will take care of that now, sir,' said Richie, with a look of importance, 'having a charge about me. And so, wussing ye a' weel, with special thanks to these twa young gentlemen——'

'I am no gentleman,' said Jenkin, flinging his cap on his

head : 'I am a tight London 'prentice, and hope to be a freeman one day. Frank may write himself gentleman, if he will.'

'I *was* a gentleman once,' said Tunstall, 'and I hope I have done nothing to lose the name of one.'

'Weel — weel, as ye list,' said Richie Moniplies ; 'but I am mickle beholden to ye baith, and I am not a hair the less like to bear it in mind that I say but little about it just now. Gude night to you, my kind countryman.' So saying, he thrust out of the sleeve of his ragged doublet a long bony hand and arm, on which the muscles rose like whip-cord. Master George shook it heartily, while Jenkin and Frank exchanged sly looks with each other.

Richie Moniplies would next have addressed his thanks to the master of the shop, but seeing him, as he afterwards said, 'scribbling on his bit bookie, as if he were demented,' he contented his politeness with 'giving him a hat,' touching, that is, his bonnet, in token of salutation, and so left the shop.

'Now, there goes Scotch Jockey, with all his bad and good about him,' said Master George to Master David, who suspended, though unwillingly, the calculations with which he was engaged, and keeping his pen within an inch of the tablets, gazed on his friend with great lack-lustre eyes, which expressed anything rather than intelligence or interest in the discourse addressed to him. 'That fellow,' proceeded Master George, without heeding his friend's state of abstraction, 'shows, with great liveliness of colouring, how our Scotch pride and poverty make liars and braggarts of us ; and yet the knave, whose every third word to an Englishman is a boastful lie, will, I warrant you, be a true and tender friend and follower to his master, and has perhaps parted with his mantle to him in the cold blast, although he himself walked *in cuerpo*, as the Don says. Strange ! that courage and fidelity — for I will warrant that the knave is stout — should have no better companion than this swaggering braggadocio humour. But you mark me not, friend Davie.'

'I do — I do, most heedfully,' said Davie. 'For, as the sun goeth round the dial-plate in twenty-four hours, add, for the moon, fifty minutes and a half —'

'You are in the seventh heavens, man,' said his companion.

'I crave your pardon,' replied Davie. 'Let the wheel A go round in twenty-four hours — I have it — and the wheel B in twenty-four hours, fifty minutes and a half — fifty-seven being

to fifty [twenty]-four, as fifty-nine to twenty-four hours, fifty minutes and a half, or very nearly, — I crave your forgiveness, Master George, and heartily wish you good-even.'

'Good-even!' said Master George; 'why, you have not wished me good day yet. Come, old friend, lay by these tablets, or you will crack the inner machinery of *your* skull, as our friend yonder has got the outer case of his damaged. Good-night, quotha! I mean not to part with you so easily. I came to get my four hours' nunchion from you, man, besides a tune on the lute from my god-daughter, Mrs. Marget.'

'Good faith! I was abstracted, Master George; but you know me. Whenever I get amongst the wheels,' said Mr. Ramsay, 'why, 't is ——'

'Lucky that you deal in small ones,' said his friend, as, awakened from his reveries and calculations, Ramsay led the way up a little back stair to the first story, occupied by his daughter and his little household.

The apprentices resumed their places in the front shop and relieved Sam Porter; when Jenkin said to Tunstall — 'Didst see, Frank, how the old goldsmith cottoned in with his beggarly countryman? When would one of his wealth have shaken hands so courteously with a poor Englishman? Well, I'll say that for the best of the Scots, that they will go over head and ears to serve a countryman, when they will not wet a nail of their finger to save a Southron, as they call us, from drowning. And yet Master George is but half-bred Scot neither in that respect; for I have known him do many a kind thing to the English too.'

'But hark ye, Jenkin,' said Tunstall, 'I think you are but half-bred English yourself. How came you to strike on the Scotsman's side after all?'

'Why, you did so, too,' answered Vincent.

'Ay, because I saw you begin; and, besides, it is no Cumberland fashion to fall fifty upon one,' replied Tunstall.

'And no Christ Church fashion neither,' said Jenkin. 'Fair play and Old England for ever! Besides, to tell you a secret, his voice had a twang in it — in the dialect I mean — reminded me of a little tongue which I think sweeter — sweeter than the last toll of St. Dunstan's will sound on the day that I am shot of my indentures. Ha! you guess who I mean, Frank?'

'Not I, indeed,' answered Tunstall. 'Scotch Janet, I suppose, the laundress.'

'Off with Janet in her own bucking-basket! — no, no, no!

You blind buzzard, do you not know I mean pretty Mrs. Marget?’

‘Umph!’ answered Tunstall, drily.

A flash of anger, not unmingled with suspicion, shot from Jenkin’s keen black eyes.

‘Umph! and what signifies “umph”? I am not the first ’prentice has married his master’s daughter, I think?’

‘They kept their own secret, I fancy,’ said Tunstall, ‘at least till they were out of their time.’

‘I tell you what it is, Frank,’ answered Jenkin, sharply, ‘that may be the fashion of you gentlefolks, that are taught from your biggin to carry two faces under the same hood, but it shall never be mine.’

‘There are the stairs, then,’ said Tunstall, coolly; ‘go up and ask Mrs. Marget of our master just now, and see what sort of a face he will wear under *his* hood.’

‘No, I wonnot,’ answered Jenkin; ‘I am not such a fool as that neither. But I will take my own time; and all the counts in Cumberland shall not cut my comb, and this is that which you may depend upon.’

Francis made no reply; and they resumed their usual attention to the business of the shop, and their usual solicitations to the passengers.¹

¹ See George Heriot. Note 5.

CHAPTER III

Bobadil. I pray you, possess no gallant of your acquaintance with a knowledge of my lodging.

Master Matthew. Who, I, sir? — Lord, sir!

BEN JONSON.

THE next morning found Nigel Olifaunt, the young Lord of Glenvarloch, seated, sad and solitary, in his little apartment in the mansion of John Christie, the ship-chandler; which that honest tradesman, in gratitude perhaps to the profession from which he derived his chief support, appeared to have constructed as nearly as possible upon the plan of a ship's cabin.

It was situated near to Paul's Wharf, at the end of one of those intricate and narrow lanes which, until that part of the city was swept away by the Great Fire in 1666, constituted an extraordinary labyrinth of small, dark, damp, and unwholesome streets and alleys, in one corner or other of which the plague was then as surely found lurking as in the obscure corners of Constantinople in our own time. But John Christie's house looked out upon the river, and had the advantage, therefore, of free air, impregnated, however, with the odoriferous fumes of the articles in which the ship-chandler dealt, with the odour of pitch, and the natural scent of the ooze and sludge left by the reflux of the tide.

Upon the whole, except that his dwelling did not float with the flood-tide and become stranded with the ebb, the young lord was nearly as comfortably accommodated as he was while on board the little trading brig from the long town of Kirkcaldy, in Fife, by which he had come a passenger to London. He received, however, every attention which could be paid him by his honest landlord, John Christie; for Richie Moniplies had not thought it necessary to preserve his master's incognito so completely but that the honest ship-chandler could form a guess that his guest's quality was superior to his appearance. As for Dame Nelly, his wife, a round, buxom, laughter-loving

dame, with black eyes, a tight, well-laced bodice, a green apron, and a red petticoat edged with a slight silver lace, and judiciously shortened so as to show that a short heel and a tight, clean ankle rested upon her well-burnished shoe — she, of course, felt interest in a young man who, besides being very handsome, good-humoured, and easily satisfied with the accommodations her house afforded, was evidently of a rank, as well as manners, highly superior to the skippers (or captains, as they called themselves) of merchant vessels, who were the usual tenants of the apartments which she let to hire, and at whose departure she was sure to find her well-scrubbed floor soiled with the relics of tobacco, which, spite of King James's *Counterblast*,¹ was then forcing itself into use, and her best curtains impregnated with the odour of Geneva and strong waters, to Dame Nelly's great indignation; for, as she truly said, the smell of the shop and warehouse was bad enough without these additions.

But all Mr. Olifaunt's habits were regular and cleanly, and his address, though frank and simple, showed so much of the courtier and gentleman as formed a strong contrast with the loud halloo, coarse jest, and boisterous impatience of her maritime inmates. Dame Nelly saw that her guest was melancholy also, notwithstanding his efforts to seem contented and cheerful; and, in short, she took that sort of interest in him, without being herself aware of its extent, which an unscrupulous gallant might have been tempted to improve to the prejudice of honest John, who was at least a score of years older than his helpmate. Olifaunt, however, had not only other matters to think of, but would have regarded such an intrigue, had the idea ever occurred to him, as an abominable and ungrateful encroachment upon the laws of hospitality, his religion having been by his late father formed upon the strict principles of the national faith, and his morality upon those of the nicest honour. He had not escaped the predominant weakness of his country — an overweening sense of the pride of birth, and a disposition to value the worth and consequence of others according to the number and the fame of their deceased ancestors; but this pride of family was well subdued, and in general almost entirely concealed, by his good sense and general courtesy.

Such as we have described him, Nigel Olifaunt, or rather the young Lord of Glenvarloch, was, when our narrative takes him up, under great perplexity respecting the fate of his trusty

¹ See Note 6.

and only follower, Richard Moniplies, who had been despatched by his young master early the preceding morning as far as the court at Westminster, but had not yet returned. His evening adventures the reader is already acquainted with, and so far knows more of Richie than did his master, who had not heard of him for twenty-four hours. Dame Nelly Christie, in the meantime, regarded her guest with some anxiety, and a great desire to comfort him if possible. She placed on the breakfast-table a noble piece of cold powdered beef, with its usual guards of turnip and carrot, recommended her mustard as coming direct from her cousin at Tewkesbury, and spiced the toast with her own hands, and with her own hands, also, drew a jug of stout and nappy ale, all of which were elements of the substantial breakfast of the period.

When she saw that her guest's anxiety prevented him from doing justice to the good cheer which she set before him, she commenced her career of verbal consolation with the usual volubility of those women in her station who, conscious of good looks, good intentions, and good lungs, entertain no fear either of wearying themselves or of fatiguing their auditors.

'Now, what the goodyear! are we to send you down to Scotland as thin as you came up? I am sure it would be contrary to the course of nature. There was my goodman's father, old Sandie Christie, I have heard he was an atomy when he came up from the North, and I am sure he died, St. Barnaby was ten years, at twenty stone weight. I was a bare-headed girl at the time, and lived in the neighbourhood, though I had little thought of marrying John then, who had a score of years the better of me — but he is a thriving man and a kind husband — and his father, as I was saying, died as fat as a churchwarden. Well, sir, but I hope I have not offended you for my little joke; and I hope the ale is to your honour's liking — and the beef — and the mustard?'

'All excellent — all too good,' answered Olifaunt; 'you have everything so clean and tidy, dame, that I shall not know how to live when I go back to my own country — if ever I go back there.'

This was added as it seemed involuntarily, and with a deep sigh.

'I warrant your honour go back again if you like it,' said the dame; 'unless you think rather of taking a pretty, well-dowered English lady, as some of your countryfolk have done. I assure you, some of the best of the city have married

Scotsmen. There was Lady Trebleplumb, Sir Thomas Trebleplumb the great Turkey merchant's widow, married Sir Awley Macauley, whom your honour knows, doubtless; and pretty Mistress Doublefee, old Sergeant Doublefee's daughter, jumped out of window and was married at Mayfair to a Scotsman with a hard name; and old Pitchpost the timber-merchant's daughters did little better, for they married two Irishmen; and when folks jeer me about having a Scotsman for lodger, meaning your honour, I tell them they are afraid of their daughters and their mistresses; and sure I have a right to stand up for the Scots, since John Christie is half a Scotsman, and a thriving man, and a good husband, though there is a score of years between us; and so I would have your honour cast care away, and mend your breakfast with a morsel and a draught.'

'At a word, my kind hostess, I cannot,' said Olifaunt; 'I am anxious about this knave of mine, who has been so long absent in this dangerous town of yours.'

It may be noticed in passing, that Dame Nelly's ordinary mode of consolation was to disprove the existence of any cause for distress; and she is said to have carried this so far as to comfort a neighbour, who had lost her husband, with the assurance that the dear defunct would be better to-morrow, which perhaps might not have proved an appropriate, even if it had been a possible, mode of relief. On this occasion she denied stoutly that Richie had been absent altogether twenty hours; and as for people being killed in the streets of London, to be sure two men had been found in Tower Ditch last week, but that was far to the east; and the other poor man that had his throat cut in the fields had met his mishap near by Islington; and he that was stabbed by the young Templar in a drunken frolic, by St. Clement's in the Strand, was an Irishman,—all which evidence she produced to show that none of these casualties had occurred in a case exactly parallel with that of Richie, a Scotsman, and on his return from Westminster.

'My better comfort is, my good dame,' answered Olifaunt, 'that the lad is no brawler or quarreller, unless strongly urged, and that he has nothing valuable about him to any one but me.'

'Your honour speaks very well,' retorted the inexhaustible hostess, who protracted her task of taking away and putting to rights, in order that she might prolong her gossip. 'I'll uphold Master Moniplies to be neither reveller nor brawler, for

if he liked such things he might be visiting and junketing with the young folks about here in the neighbourhood, and he never dreams of it; and when I asked the young man to go as far as my gossip's, Dame Drinkwater, to taste a glass of aniseed and a bit of the groaning cheese — for Dame Drinkwater has had twins, as I told your honour, sir — and I meant it quite civilly to the young man, but he chose to sit and keep house with John Christie; and I daresay there is a score of years between them, for your honour's servant looks scarce much older than I am. I wonder what they could have to say to each other. I asked John Christie, but he bid me go to sleep.'

'If he comes not soon,' said his master, 'I will thank you to tell me what magistrate I can address myself to; for, besides my anxiety for the poor fellow's safety, he has papers of importance about him.'

'Oh! your honour may be assured he will be back in a quarter of an hour,' said Dame Nelly: 'he is not the lad to stay out twenty-four hours at a stretch. And for the papers, I am sure your honour will pardon him for just giving me a peep at the corner, as I was giving him a small cup, not so large as my thimble, of distilled waters, to fortify his stomach against the damps, and it was directed to the King's Most Excellent Majesty; and so doubtless his Majesty has kept Richie out of civility to consider of your honour's letter, and send back a fitting reply.'

Dame Nelly here hit by chance on a more available topic of consolation than those she had hitherto touched upon; for the youthful lord had himself some vague hopes that his messenger might have been delayed at court until a fitting and favourable answer should be despatched back to him. Inexperienced, however, in public affairs as he certainly was, it required only a moment's consideration to convince him of the improbability of an expectation so contrary to all he had heard of etiquette, as well as the dilatory proceeding in a court suit, and he answered the good-natured hostess with a sigh, that he doubted whether the King would even look on the paper addressed to him, far less take it into his immediate consideration.

'Now, out upon you for a faint-hearted gentleman!' said the good dame; 'and why should he not do as much for us as our gracious Queen Elizabeth? Many people say this and that about a queen and a king, but I think a king comes more natural to us English folks; and this good gentleman goes as

often down by water to Greenwich, and employs as many of the bargemen and watermen of all kinds; and maintains, in his royal grace, John Taylor, the Water Poet, who keeps both a sculler and a pair of oars. And he has made a comely court at Whitehall, just by the river; and since the King is so good a friend to the Thames, I cannot see, if it please your honour, why all his subjects, and your honour in specialty, should not have satisfaction by his hands.'

'True, dame — true; let us hope for the best; but I must take my cloak and rapier, and pray your husband in courtesy to teach me the way to a magistrate.'

'Sure, sir,' said the prompt dame, 'I can do that as well as he, who has been a slow man of his tongue all his life, though I will give him his due for being a loving husband, and a man as well to pass in the world as any betwixt us and the top of the lane. And so there is the sitting alderman, that is always at the Guildhall, which is close by Paul's, and so I warrant you he puts all to rights in the city that wisdom can mend; and for the rest there is no help but patience. But I wish I were as sure of forty pounds as I am that the young man will come back safe and sound.'

Olifaunt, in great and anxious doubt of what the good dame so strongly averred, flung his cloak on one shoulder, and was about to belt on his rapier, when first the voice of Richie Moniplies on the stair, and then that faithful emissary's appearance in the chamber, put the matter beyond question. Dame Nelly, after congratulating Moniplies on his return, and paying several compliments to her own sagacity for having foretold it, was at length pleased to leave the apartment. The truth was, that, besides some instinctive feelings of good-breeding which combated her curiosity, she saw there was no chance of Richie's proceeding in his narrative while she was in the room, and she therefore retreated, trusting that her own address would get the secret out of one or other of the young men, when she should have either by himself.

'Now, in Heaven's name, what is the matter?' said Nigel Olifaunt. 'Where have you been or what have you been about? You look as pale as death. There is blood on your hand, and your clothes are torn. What barns-breaking have you been at? You have been drunk, Richard; and fighting.'

'Fighting I have been,' said Richard, 'in a small way; but for being drunk, that's a job ill to manage in this town, without money to come by liquor; and as for barns-breaking, the deil

a thing's broken but my head. It's not made of iron, I wot, nor my claithes of chenzie-mail; so a club smashed the tane, and a claught damaged the tither. Some misleard rascals abused my country, but I think I cleared the causey of them. However, the haill hive was ower mony for me at last, and I got this eclipse on the crown, and then I was carried, beyond my kenning, to a sma' booth at the Temple Port, whare they sell the whirlygigs and mony-go-rounds that measure out time as a man wad measure a tartan web; and then they bled me, wold I nold I, and were reasonably civil, especially an auld countryman of ours, of whom more hereafter.'

'And at what o'clock might this be?' said Nigel.

'The twa iron carles yonder, at the kirk beside the Port,¹ were just banging out sax o' the clock.'

'And why came you not home as soon as you recovered?' said Nigel.

'In troth, my lord, every why has its wherefore, and this has a gude ane,' answered his follower. 'To come hame, I behoved to ken whare hame was; now, I had clean tint the name of the wynd, and the mair I asked, the mair the folk leugh, and the farther they sent me wrang; sae I gave it up till God should send daylight to help me; and as I saw mysell near a kirk at the lang run, I e'en crap in to take up my night's quarters in the kirkyard.'

'In the churchyard?' said Nigel. 'But I need not ask what drove you to such a pinch.'

'It wasna sae much the want o' siller, my Lord Nigel,' said Richie, with an air of mysterious importance, 'for I was no sae absolute without means, of whilk mair anon; but I thought I wad never ware a saxpence sterling on ane of their saucy chamberlains at a hostelry, sae lang as I could sleep fresh and fine in a fair, dry, spring night. Mony a time, when I hae come hame ower late, and faund the West Port steekit, and the waiter ill-willy, I have garr'd the sexton of St. Cuthbert's calf-ward serve me for my quarters. But then there are dainty green graffs in St. Cuthbert's kirkyard, where ane may sleep as if they were in a down-bed, till they hear the lavrock singing up in the air as high as the Castle; whereas, and behold, these London kirkyards are causeyed with through-stanes, panged hard and fast thegither; and my cloak, being something thread-bare, made but a thin mattress, so I was fain to give up my

¹ The old church of St. Dunstan's in Fleet Street had an overhanging clock with two bells, which were struck at the quarters by two wooden figures armed with clubs (*Laing*).

bed before every limb about me was crippled. Dead folks may sleep yonder sound enow, but deil haet else.'

'And what became of you next?' said his master.

'I just took to a canny bulk-head, as they ca' them here; that is, the boards on the tap of their bits of outshots of stalls and booths, and there I sleepit as sound as if I was in a castle. Not but I was disturbed with some of the night-walking queans and swaggering billies, but when they fand there was nothing to be got by me but a slash of my Andrew Ferrara, they bid me good-night for a beggarly Scot; and i was e'en weel pleased to be sae cheap rid of them. And in the morning I cam daikering here; but sad wark I had to find the way, for I had been east as far as the place they ca' Mile End, though it is mair like sax-mile-end.'

'Well, Richie,' answered Nigel, 'I am glad all this has ended so well. Go get something to eat. I am sure you need it.'

'In troth do I, sir,' replied Moniplies; 'but, with your lordship's leave ——'

'Forget the lordship for the present, Richie, as I have often told you before.'

'Faith,' replied Richie, 'I could weel forget that your honour was a lord, but then I behoved to forget that I am a lord's man, and that's not so easy. But however,' he added, assisting his description with the thumb and the two forefingers of his right hand, thrust out after the fashion of a bird's claw, while the little finger and the ring-finger were closed upon the palm, 'to the court I went, and my friend that promised me a sight of his Majesty's most gracious presence was as gude as his word, and carried me into the back offices, where I got the best breakfast I have had since we came here, and it did me gude for the rest of the day; for as to what I have eaten in this accursed town, it is aye sauced with the disquieting thought that it maun be paid for. After a', there was but beef banes and fat brose; but king's cauff, your honour kens, is better than ither folks' corn; at ony rate, it was a' in free awmous. But I see,' he added, stopping short, 'that your honour waxes impatient.'

'By no means, Richie,' said the young nobleman, with an air of resignation, for he well knew his domestic would not mend his pace for goading; 'you have suffered enough in the embassy to have a right to tell the story in your own way. Only let me pray for the name of the friend who was to introduce you into the King's presence. You were very mysterious on the subject, when you undertook, through his means, to

have the supplication put into his Majesty's own hands, since those sent heretofore, I have every reason to think, went no farther than his secretary's.'

'Weel, my lord,' said Richie, 'I did not tell you his name and quality at first, because I thought you would be affronted at the like of him having to do in your lordship's affairs. But mony a man climbs up in court by waur help. It was just Laurie Linklater, one of the yeomen of the kitchen, that was my father's apprentice lang syne.'

'A yeoman of the kitchen—a scullion!' exclaimed Lord Nigel, pacing the room in displeasure.

'But consider, sir,' said Richie, composedly, 'that a' your great friends hung back, and shunned to own you, or to advocate your petition; and then, though I am sure I wish Laurie a higher office, for your lordship's sake and for mine, and especially for his ain sake, being a friendly lad, yet your lordship must consider, that a scullion, if a yeoman of the king's most royal kitchen may be called a scullion, may weel rank with a master cook elsewhere; being that king's cauff, as I said before, is better than——'

'You are right, and I was wrong,' said the young nobleman. 'I have no choice of means of making my case known, so that they be honest.'

'Laurie is as honest a lad as ever lifted a ladle,' said Richie; 'not but what I dare to say he can lick his fingers like other folk, and reason good. But, in fine, for I see your honour is waxing impatient, he brought me to the palace, where a' was astir for the King going out to hunt or hawk on Blackheath, I think they ca'd it. And there was a horse stood with all the quarries about it, a bonny grey as ever was foaled; and the saddle and the stirrups, and the curb and bit, o' burning gowd, or silver gilded at least; and down, sir, came the King, with all his nobles, dressed out in his hunting-suit of green, doubly laced, and laid down with gowd. I minded the very face o' him, though it was lang since I saw him. But "My certie, lad," thought I, "times are changed since ye came fleeing down the backstairs of auld Holyrood House, in grit fear, having your breeks in your hand without time to put them on, and Frank Stewart, the wild Earl of Bothwell, hard at your haunches; and if auld Lord Glenvarloch hadna cast his mantle about his arm, and taken bluidy wounds mair than ane in your behalf, you wald not have craw'd sae crouse this day"; and so saying, I could not but think your lordship's siffication could not be less than most

acceptable; and so I banged in among the crowd of lords. Laurie thought me mad, and held me by the cloak-lap till the cloth rave in his hand; and so I banged in right before the King just as he mounted, and crammed the siffication into his hand, and he opened it like in amaze; and just as he saw the first line, I was minded to make a reverence, and I had the ill luck to hit his jaud o' a beast on the nose with my hat and scaur the creature, and she swarved aside, and the King, that sits na mickle better than a draff-pock on the saddle, was like to have gotten a clean coup, and that might have cost my craig a raxing; and he flung down the paper amang the beast's feet, and cried, "Away wi' the fause loon that brought it!" And they grippit me, and cried "Treason"; and I thought of the Ruthvens that were dirked in their ain house, for, it may be, as small a forfeit. However, they spak only of scourging me, and had me away to the porter's lodge to try the tawse on my back, and I was crying mercy as loud as I could; and the King, when he had righted himsell on the saddle, and gathered his breath, cried to do me nae harm. "For," said he, "he is ane of our ain Norland stots, I ken by the rowt of him"; and they a' laughed and rowted loud eneugh. And then he said, "Gie him a copy of the proclamation, and let him go down to the North by the next light collier, before waur come o't." So they let me go, and rode a' sniggering, laughing, and rounding in ilk ither's lugs. A sair life I had wi' Laurie Linklater; for he said it wad be the ruin of him. And then, when I told him it was in your matter, he said if he had known before he would have risked a scauding for you, because he minded the brave old lord, your father. And then he showed how I suld have done, and that I suld have held up my hand to my brow, as if the grandeur of the King and his horse-graith thegither had casten the glaiks in my een, and mair jackanape tricks I suld hae played, instead of offering the siffication, he said, as if I had been bringing guts to a bear.¹ "For," said he, "Richie, the King is a weel-natured and just man of his ain kindly nature, but he has a whim maggots that maun be cannily guided; and then, Richie," says he, in a very laigh tone, "I would tell it to nane but a wise man like yoursell, but the King has them about him wad corrupt an angel from Heaven; but I could have gi'en you avisement how to have guided him, but now it's like after meat mustard." "Aweel — aweel, Laurie," said I, "it may be as you say; but since I am clear of the tawse and the porter's lodge, sifficate wha like, deil

¹ See James's Love of Flattery. Note 7.

hae Richie Moniplies if he come sifflicating here again." And so away I came, and I wasna far by the Temple Port, or Bar, or whatever they ca' it, when I met with the misadventure that I tauld you of before.'

'Well, my honest Richie,' said Lord Nigel, 'your attempt was well meant, and not so ill conducted, I think, as to have deserved so bad an issue; but go to your beef and mustard, and we'll talk of the rest afterwards.'

'There is nae mair to be spoken, sir,' said his follower, 'except that I met ane very honest, fair-spoken, weel-put-on gentleman, or rather burgher, as I think, that was in the whigmaleery man's back shop; and when he learned wha I was, behold he was a kindly Scot himsell, and, what is more, a town's-bairn o' the gude town, and he behoved to compel me to take this Portugal piece, to drink forsooth — "My certie," thought I, "we ken better, for we will eat it" — and he spoke of paying your lordship a visit.'

'You did not tell him where I lived, you knave?' said the Lord Nigel, angrily. 'Sdeath! I shall have every clownish burgher from Edinburgh come to gaze on my distress, and pay a shilling for having seen the motion¹ of the poor noble!'

'Tell him where you lived?' said Richie, evading the question. 'How could I tell him what I kendna mysell? If I had minded the name of the wynd, I need not have slept in the kirkyard yestreen.'

'See, then, that you give no one notice of our lodging,' said the young nobleman; 'those with whom I have business I can meet at Paul's or in the Court of Requests.'

'This is steeking the stable-door when the steed is stolen,' thought Richie to himself; 'but I must put him on another pin.'

So thinking, he asked the young lord what was in the proclamation which he still held folded in his hand; 'for, having little time to spell at it,' said he, 'your lordship well knows I ken nought about it but the grand blazon at the tap; the lion has gotten a claught of our auld Scottish shield now, but it was as weel upheld when it had a unicorn on ilk side of it.'

Lord Nigel read the proclamation, and he coloured deep with shame and indignation as he read; for the purport was, to his injured feelings, like the pouring of ardent spirits upon a recent wound.

'What deil's in the paper, my lord?' said Richie, unable to suppress his curiosity as he observed his master change colour.

¹ Motion — puppet-show.

'I wadna ask such a thing, only the proclamation is not a private thing, but is meant for a men's hearing.'

'It is indeed meant for all men's hearing,' replied Lord Nigel, 'and it proclaims the shame of our country and the ingratitude of our prince.'

'Now the lord preserve us! and to publish it in London, too!' ejaculated Moniplies.

'Hark ye, Richard,' said Nigel Olifaunt, 'in this paper the Lords of the Council set forth that, "In consideration of the resort of idle persons of low condition forth from his Majesty's kingdom of Scotland to his English court, filling the same with their suits and supplications, and dishonouring the royal presence with their base, poor, and beggarly persons, to the disgrace of their country in the estimation of the English — these are to prohibit the skippers, masters of vessels and others, in every part of Scotland, from bringing such miserable creatures up to court, under pain of fine and imprisonment."'

'I marle the skipper took us on board,' said Richie.

'Then you need not marvel how you are to get back again,' said Lord Nigel, 'for here is a clause which says that such idle suitors are to be transported back to Scotland at his Majesty's expense, and punished for their audacity with stripes, stocking, or incarceration, according to their demerits; that is to say, I suppose, according to the degree of their poverty, for I see no other demerit specified.'

'This will scarcely,' said Richie, 'square with our old proverb —

A king's face
Should give grace.

But what says the paper farther, my lord?'

'Oh, only a small clause which especially concerns us, making some still heavier denunciations against those suitors who shall be so bold as to approach the court, under pretext of seeking payment of old debts due to them by the King, which, the paper states, is, of all species of importunity, that which is most odious to his Majesty.'¹

'The King has neighbours in that matter,' said Richie; 'but it is not every one that can shift off that sort of cattle so easily as he does.'

Their conversation was here interrupted by a knocking at the door. Olifaunt looked out at the window, and saw an elderly

¹ See Proclamation against the Scots. Note 8.

respectable person whom he knew not. Richie also peeped, and recognised, but, recognising, chose not to acknowledge, his friend of the preceding evening. Afraid that his share in the visit might be detected, he made his escape out of the apartment under pretext of going to his breakfast; and left their landlady the task of ushering Master George into Lord Nigel's apartment, which she performed with much courtesy.

CHAPTER IV

Ay, sir, the clouted shoe hath oftentimes craft in 't,
As says the rustic proverb ; and your citizen,
In 's grogam suit, gold chain, and well-black'd shoes,
Bears under his flat cap oftentimes a brain
Wiser than burns beneath the cap and feather,
Or seethes within the statesman's velvet nightcap.

Read me my Riddle.

THE young Scottish nobleman received the citizen with distant politeness, expressing that sort of reserve by which those of the higher ranks are sometimes willing to make a plebeian sensible that he is an intruder. But Master George seemed neither displeased nor disconcerted. He assumed the chair which, in deference to his respectable appearance, Lord Nigel offered to him, and said, after a moment's pause, during which he had looked attentively at the young man, with respect not unmingled with emotion — 'You will forgive me for this rudeness, my lord ; but I was endeavouring to trace in your youthful countenance the features of my good old lord, your excellent father.'

There was a moment's pause ere young Glenvarloch replied, still with a reserved manner — 'I have been reckoned like my father, sir ; and am happy to see any one that respects his memory. But the business which calls me to this city is of a hasty as well as of a private nature, and ——'

'I understand the hint, my lord,' said Master George, 'and would not be guilty of long detaining you from business or more agreeable conversation. My errand is almost done when I have said that my name is George Heriot, warmly befriended, and introduced into the employment of the royal family of Scotland, more than twenty years since, by your excellent father ; and that, learning from a follower of yours that your lordship was in this city in prosecution of some business of importance, it is my duty — it is my pleasure — to wait on the son of my respected patron ; and, as I am somewhat known both at the

court and in the city, to offer him such aid in the furthering of his affairs as my credit and experience may be able to afford.'

'I have no doubt of either, Master Heriot,' said Lord Nigel, 'and I thank you heartily for the good-will with which you have placed them at a stranger's disposal; but my business at court is done and ended, and I intend to leave London, and, indeed, the island, for foreign travel and military service. I may add, that the suddenness of my departure occasions my having little time at my disposal.'

Master Heriot did not take the hint, but sat fast, with an embarrassed countenance, however, like one who had something to say that he knew not exactly how to make effectual. At length he said, with a dubious smile, 'You are fortunate, my lord, in having so soon despatched your business at court. Your talking landlady informs me you have been but a fortnight in this city. It is usually months and years ere the court and a suitor shake hands and part.'

'My business,' said Lord Nigel, with a brevity which was intended to stop further discussion, 'was summarily despatched.'

Still Master Heriot remained seated, and there was a cordial good-humour added to the reverence of his appearance, which rendered it impossible for Lord Nigel to be more explicit in requesting his absence.

'Your lordship has not yet had time,' said the citizen, still attempting to sustain the conversation, 'to visit the places of amusement—the playhouses and other places to which youth resort. But I see in your lordship's hand one of the new-invented plots of the piece,¹ which they hand about of late. May I ask what play?'

'Oh! a well-known piece,' said Lord Nigel, impatiently throwing down the proclamation, which he had hitherto been twisting to and fro in his hand—'an excellent and well-approved piece—*A New Way to Pay Old Debts*.'

Master Heriot stooped down, saying, 'Ah! my old acquaintance, Philip Massinger'; but, having opened the paper and seen the purport, he looked at Lord Nigel Olifaunt with surprise, saying, 'I trust your lordship does not think this prohibition can extend either to *your* person or your claims?'

'I should scarce have thought so myself,' said the young nobleman; 'but so it proves. His Majesty, to close this discourse at once, has been pleased to send me this proclamation, in answer to a respectful supplication for the repayment of large

¹ Meaning, probably, playbills.

loans advanced by my father for the service of the state, in the King's utmost emergencies.'

'It is impossible!' said the citizen — 'it is absolutely impossible! If the King could forget what was due to your father's memory, still he would not have wished — would not, I may say, have dared — to be so flagrantly unjust to the memory of such a man as your father, who, dead in the body, will long live in the memory of the Scottish people.'

'I should have been of your opinion,' answered Lord Nigel, in the same tone as before; 'but there is no fighting with facts.'

'What was the tenor of this supplication?' said Heriot; 'or by whom was it presented? Something strange there must have been in the contents, or ——'

'You may see my original draught,' said the young lord, taking it out of a small travelling strong-box; 'the technical part is by my lawyer in Scotland, a skilful and sensible man; the rest is my own, drawn, I hope, with due deference and modesty.'

Master Heriot hastily cast his eye over the draught. 'Nothing,' he said, 'can be more well-tempered and respectful. Is it possible the King can have treated this petition with contempt?'

'He threw it down on the pavement,' said the Lord of Glenvarloch, 'and sent me for answer that proclamation, in which he classes me with the paupers and mendicants from Scotland, who disgrace his court in the eyes of the proud English — that is all. Had not my father stood by him with heart, sword, and fortune, he might never have seen the court of England himself.'

'But by whom was this supplication presented, my lord?' said Heriot; 'for the distaste taken at the messenger will sometimes extend itself to the message.'

'By my servant,' said the Lord Nigel — 'by the man you saw, and, I think, were kind to.'

'By your servant, my lord?' said the citizen; 'he seems a shrewd fellow, and doubtless a faithful; but surely ——'

'You would say,' said Lord Nigel, 'he is no fit messenger to a king's presence? Surely he is not; but what could I do? Every attempt I had made to lay my case before the King had miscarried, and my petitions got no farther than the budgets of clerks and secretaries; this fellow pretended he had a friend in the household that would bring him to the King's presence, and so ——'

'I understand,' said Heriot; 'but, my lord, why should you not, in right of your rank and birth, have appeared at court, and required an audience, which could not have been denied to you?'

The young lord blushed a little, and looked at his dress, which was very plain; and, though in perfect good order, had the appearance of having seen service.

'I know not why I should be ashamed of speaking the truth,' he said, after a momentary hesitation: 'I had no dress suitable for appearing at court. I am determined to incur no expenses which I cannot discharge; and I think you, sir, would not advise me to stand at the palace door in person and deliver my petition along with those who are in very deed pleading their necessity and begging an alms.'

'That had been, indeed, unseemly,' said the citizen; 'but yet, my lord, my mind runs strangely that there must be some mistake. Can I speak with your domestic?'

'I see little good it can do,' answered the young lord, 'but the interest you take in my misfortunes seems sincere, and therefore ——' He stamped on the floor, and in a few seconds afterwards Moniplies appeared, wiping from his beard and mustachios the crumbs of bread and the froth of the ale-pot, which plainly showed how he had been employed. 'Will your lordship grant permission,' said Heriot, 'that I ask your groom a few questions?'

'His lordship's page, Master George,' answered Moniplies, with a nod of acknowledgment, 'if you are minded to speak according to the letter.'

'Hold your saucy tongue,' said his master, 'and reply distinctly to the questions you are to be asked.'

'And *truly*, if it like your pageship,' said the citizen, 'for you may remember I have a gift to discover falset.'

'Weel — weel — weel,' replied the domestic, somewhat embarrassed, in spite of his effrontery, 'though I think that the sort of truth that serves my master may weel serve any one else.'

'Pages lie to their masters by right of custom,' said the citizen; 'and you write yourself in that band, though I think you be among the oldest of such springalds; but to me you must speak truth, if you would not have it end in the whipping-post.'

'And that's e'en a bad resting-place,' said the well-grown page; 'so come away with your questions, Master George.'

'Well, then,' demanded the citizen, 'I am given to under-

stand that you yesterday presented to his Majesty's hand a supplication, or petition, from this honourable lord, your master.'

'Troth, there's nae gainsaying that, sir,' replied Moniplies; 'there was enow to see it besides me.'

'And you pretend that his Majesty flung it from him with contempt?' said the citizen. 'Take heed, for I have means of knowing the truth; and you were better up to the neck in the Nor' Loch, which you like so well, than tell a leasing where his Majesty's name is concerned.'

'There is nae occasion for leasing-making about the matter,' answered Moniplies, firmly; 'his Majesty e'en flung it frae him as if it had dirtied his fingers.'

'You hear, sir,' said Olifaunt, addressing Heriot.

'Hush!' said the sagacious citizen; 'this fellow is not ill-named: he has more plies than one in his cloak. Stay, fellow,' for Moniplies, muttering somewhat about finishing his breakfast, was beginning to shamble towards the door, 'answer me this farther question: When you gave your master's petition to his Majesty, gave you nothing with it?'

'Ou, what should I give wi' it, ye ken, Master George?'

'That is what I desire and insist to know,' replied his interrogator.

'Weel, then — I am not free to say that maybe I might not just slip into the King's hand a wee bit siffication of mine ain, along with my lord's — just to save his Majesty trouble, and that he might consider them baith at ance.'

'A supplication of your own, you varlet!' said his master.

'Ou dear, ay, my lord,' said Richie; 'puir bodies hae their bits of siffications as weel as their betters.'

'And pray, what might your worshipful petition import?' said Master Heriot. 'Nay, for Heaven's sake, my lord, keep your patience, or we shall never learn the truth of this strange matter. Speak out, sirrah, and I will stand your friend with my lord.'

'It's a lang story to tell — but the upshot is, that it's a scrape of an auld accompt due to my father's yestate by her Majesty, the King's maist gracious mother, when she lived in the Castle, and had sundry providings and furnishings forth of our booth, whilk nae doubt was an honour to my father to supply, and whilk, doubtless, it will be a credit to his Majesty to satisfy, as it will be grit convenience to me to receive the saam.'

'What string of impertinence is this?' said his master.

'Every word as true as e'er John Knox spoke,' said Richie ; 'here's the bit double of the sifflication.'

Master George took a crumpled paper from the fellow's hand, and said, muttering betwixt his teeth : "'Humbly showeth—um—um—his Majesty's maist gracious mother—um—um—justly addebtet and owing the sum of fifteen merks—the compt whereof followeth : —Twelve nowte's feet for jillies—ane lamb, being Christmas—ane roasted capin in grease for the privy chalmer, when my Lord of Bothwell suppit with her Grace." I think, my lord, you can hardly be surprised that the King gave this petition a brisk reception ; and I conclude, Master Page, that you took care to present your own supplication before your master's ?'

'Troth did I not,' answered Moniplies ; 'I thought to have given my lord's first, as was reason gude ; and besides that, it wad have redd the gate for my ain little bill. But what wi' the dirdum an' confusion, an' the loupin' here and there of the skeigh brute of a horse, I believe I crammed them baith into his hand cheek-by-jowl, and maybe my ain was bunemost ; and say there was aught wrang, I am sure I had a' the fright and a' the risk——'

'And shall have all the beating, you rascal knave,' said Nigel. 'Am I to be insulted and dishonoured by your pragmatical insolence, in blending your base concerns with mine ?'

'Nay—nay—nay, my lord,' said the good-humoured citizen, interposing ; 'I have been the means of bringing the fellow's blunder to light, allow me interest enough with your lordship to be bail for his bones. You have cause to be angry, but still I think the knave mistook more out of conceit than of purpose ; and I judge you will have the better service of him another time if you overlook this fault. Get you gone, sirrah ; I'll make your peace.'

'Na—na,' said Moniplies, keeping his ground firmly, 'if he likes to strike a lad that has followed him for pure love, for I think there has been little servant's fee between us, a' the way frae Scotland, just let my lord be doing, and see the credit he will get by it ; and I would rather—mony thanks to you though, Master George—stand by a lick of his baton than it suld e'er be said a stranger came between us.'

'Go, then,' said his master, 'and get out of my sight.'

'Aweel I wot that is sune done,' said Moniplies, retiring slowly ; 'I did not come without I had been ca'd for, and I wad have been away half an hour since with my gude will,

only Maister George keepit me to answer his interrogation, forsooth, and that has made a' this stir.'

And so he made his grumbling exit, with the tone much rather of one who has sustained an injury than who has done wrong.

'There never was a man so plagued as I am with a malapert knave! The fellow is shrewd, and I have found him faithful. I believe he loves me, too, and he has given proofs of it; but then he is so uplifted in his own conceit, so self-willed, and so self-opinioned, that he seems to become the master and I the man; and whatever blunder he commits, he is sure to make as loud complaints as if the whole error lay with me, and in no degree with himself.'

'Cherish him, and maintain him, nevertheless,' said the citizen; 'for believe my grey hairs, that affection and fidelity are now rarer qualities in a servitor than when the world was younger. Yet, trust him, my good lord, with no commission above his birth or breeding, for you see yourself how it may chance to fall.'

'It is but too evident, Master Heriot,' said the young nobleman; 'and I am sorry I have done injustice to my sovereign, and your master. But I am, like a true Scotsman, wise behind hand; the mistake has happened, my supplication has been refused, and my only resource is to employ the rest of my means to carry Moniplies and myself to some counterscarp, and die in the battle-front like my ancestors.'

'It were better to live and serve your country like your noble father, my lord,' replied Master George. 'Nay—nay, never look down or shake your head. The King has not refused your supplication, for he has not seen it; you ask but justice, and that his place obliges him to give to his subjects—ay, my lord, and I will say that his natural temper doth in this hold bias with his duty.'

'I were well pleased to think so, and yet——' said Nigel Olifaunt. 'I speak not of my own wrongs, but my country hath many that are unredressed.'

'My lord,' said Master Heriot, 'I speak of my royal master not only with the respect due from a subject, the gratitude to be paid by a favoured servant, but also with the frankness of a free and loyal Scotsman. The King is himself well disposed to hold the scales of justice even; but there are those around him who can throw without detection their own selfish wishes and base interests into the scale. You are already a sufferer by this, and without your knowing it.'

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take possession, and when the odium of the transaction shall be forgotten, the property and lordship of Glenvarloch will be conveyed to the great man by his obsequious instrument, under cover of a sale or some similar device.'

'Can this be possible?' said Lord Nigel. 'The chancellor wept when I took leave of him — called me his cousin, even his son — furnished me with letters, and, though I asked him for no pecuniary assistance, excused himself unnecessarily for not pressing it on me, alleging the expenses of his rank and his large family. No, I cannot believe a nobleman would carry deceit so far.'

'I am not, it is true, of noble blood,' said the citizen; 'but once more I bid you look on my grey hairs, and think what can be my interest in dishonouring them with falsehood in affairs in which I have no interest, save as they regard the son of my benefactor. Reflect also, have you had any advantage from the Lord Chancellor's letters?'

'None,' said Nigel Olifaunt, 'except cold deeds and fair words. I have thought for some time, their only object was to get rid of me; one yesterday pressed money on me when I talked of going abroad, in order that I might not want the means of exiling myself.'

'Right,' said Heriot; 'rather than you fled not, they would themselves furnish wings for you to fly withal.'

'I will to him this instant,' said the incensed youth, 'and tell him my mind of his baseness.'

'Under your favour,' said Heriot, detaining him, 'you shall not do so. By a quarrel you would become the ruin of me your informer; and though I would venture half my shop to do your lordship a service, I think you would hardly wish me to come by damage, when it can be of no service to you.'

The word 'shop' sounded harshly in the ears of the young nobleman, who replied hastily, 'Damage, sir! So far am I from wishing you to incur damage, that I would to Heaven you would cease your fruitless offers of serving one whom there is no chance of ultimately assisting.'

'Leave me alone for that,' said the citizen; 'you have now erred as far on the bow-hand. Permit me to take this supplication; I will have it suitably engrossed, and take my own time — and it shall be an early one — for placing it, with more prudence, I trust, than that used by your follower, in the King's hand. I will almost answer for his taking up the matter as you would

‘I am surprised, Master Heriot,’ said the young lord, ‘to hear you, upon so short an acquaintance, talk as if you were familiarly acquainted with my affairs.’

‘My lord,’ replied the goldsmith, ‘the nature of my employment affords me direct access to the interior of the palace; I am well known to be no meddler in intrigues or party affairs, so that no favourite has as yet endeavoured to shut against me the door of the royal closet; on the contrary, I have stood well with each while he was in power, and I have not shared the fall of any. But I cannot be thus connected with the court without hearing, even against my will, what wheels are in motion, and how they are checked or forwarded. Of course, when I choose to seek such intelligence, I know the sources in which it is to be traced. I have told you why I was interested in your lordship’s fortunes. It was last night only that I knew you were in this city, yet I have been able, in coming hither this morning, to gain for you some information respecting the impediments to your suit.’

‘Sir, I am obliged by your zeal, however little it may be merited,’ answered Nigel, still with some reserve; ‘yet I hardly know how I have deserved this interest.’

‘First let me satisfy you that it is real,’ said the citizen. ‘I blame you not for being unwilling to credit the fair professions of a stranger in my inferior class of society, when you have met so little friendship from relations and those of your own rank, bound to have assisted you by so many ties. But mark the cause. There is a mortgage over your father’s extensive estate, to the amount of 40,000 merks, due ostensibly to Peregrine Peterson, the Conservator of Scottish Privileges at Campvere.’

‘I know nothing of a mortgage,’ said the young lord; ‘but there is a wadset for such a sum, which, if unredeemed, will occasion the forfeiture of my whole paternal estate, for a sum not above a fourth of its value; and it is for that very reason that I press the King’s government for a settlement of the debts due to my father, that I may be able to redeem my land from this rapacious creditor.’

‘A wadset in Scotland,’ said Heriot, ‘is the same with a mortgage on this side of the Tweed; but you are not acquainted with your real creditor. The Conservator Peterson only lends his name to shroud no less a man than the Lord Chancellor of Scotland, who hopes, under cover of this debt, to gain possession of the estate himself, or perhaps to gratify a yet more powerful third party. He will probably suffer his creature Peterson to

‘Master Heriot,’ said the Lord Nigel, ‘your favour is generously offered, and shall be frankly accepted. I must presume that you see your way through this business, though I hardly do; for I think you would be grieved to add any fresh burden to me, by persuading me to incur debts which I am not likely to discharge. I will therefore take your money, under the hope and trust that you will enable me to repay you punctually.’

‘I will convince you, my lord,’ said the goldsmith, ‘that I mean to deal with you as a creditor [debtor] from whom I expect payment; and therefore you shall, with your own good pleasure, sign an acknowledgment for these monies, and an obligation to content and repay me.’

He then took from his girdle his writing-materials, and, writing a few lines to the purport he expressed, pulled out a small bag of gold from a side-pouch under his cloak, and, observing that it should contain an hundred pounds, proceeded to tell out the contents very methodically upon the table. Nigel Olifaunt could not help intimating that this was an unnecessary ceremonial, and that he would take the bag of gold on the word of his obliging creditor; but this was repugnant to the old man’s forms of transacting business.

‘Bear with me,’ he said, ‘my good lord; we citizens are a wary and thrifty generation, and I should lose my good name for ever within the toll of Paul’s were I to grant quittance or take acknowledgment without bringing the money to actual tale. I think it be right now; and, body of me,’ he said, looking out at the window, ‘yonder come my boys with my mule; for I must westward ho. Put your monies aside, my lord; it is not well to be seen with such goldfinches chirping about one in the lodgings of London. I think the lock of your casket be indifferent good; if not, I can serve you at an easy rate with one that has held thousands; it was the good old Sir Faithful Frugal’s; his spendthrift son sold the shell when he had eaten the kernel — and there is the end of a city fortune.’

‘I hope yours will make a better termination, Master Heriot,’ said the Lord Nigel.

‘I hope it will, my lord,’ said the old man, with a smile; ‘but,’ — to use honest John Bunyan’s phrase, ‘therewithal the water stood in his eyes,’ — ‘it has pleased God to try me with the loss of two children; and for one adopted child who lives — ah! woe is me! and well-a-day! But I am patient and thankful; and for the wealth God has sent me, it shall not

have him ; but should he fail to do so, even then I will not give up the good cause.'

'Sir,' said the young nobleman, 'your speech is so friendly, and my own state so helpless, that I know not how to refuse your kind proffer, even while I blush to accept it at the hands of a stranger.'

'We are, I trust, no longer such,' said the goldsmith ; 'and for my guerdon, when my mediation proves successful, and your fortunes are re-established, you shall order your first cupboard of plate from George Heriot.'

'You would have a bad paymaster, Master Heriot,' said Lord Nigel.

'I do not fear that,' replied the goldsmith ; 'and I am glad to see you smile, my lord — methinks it makes you look still more like the good old lord your father ; and it emboldens me, besides, to bring out a small request, that you would take a homely dinner with me to-morrow. I lodge hard by, in Lombard Street. For the cheer, my lord, a mess of white broth, a fat capon well larded, a dish of beef collops for auld Scotland's sake, and it may be a cup of right old wine, that was barrelled before Scotland and England were one nation. Then for company, one or two of our own loving countrymen ; and maybe my housewife may find out a bonny Scots lass or so.'

'I would accept your courtesy, Master Heriot,' said Nigel, 'but I hear the city ladies of London like to see a man gallant ; I would not like to let down a Scottish nobleman in their ideas, as doubtless you have said the best of our poor country, and I rather lack the means of bravery for the present.'

'My lord, your frankness leads me a step farther,' said Master George. 'I — I owed your father some monies, and — nay, if your lordship looks at me so fixedly, I shall never tell my story — and, to speak plainly — for I never could carry a lie well through in my life — it is most fitting that, to solicit this matter properly, your lordship should go to court in a manner befitting your quality. I am a goldsmith, and live by lending money as well as by selling plate. I am ambitious to put an hundred pounds to be at interest in your hands, till your affairs are settled.'

'And if they are never favourably settled ?' said Nigel.

'Then, my lord,' returned the citizen, 'the miscarriage of such a sum will be of little consequence to me, compared with other subjects of regret.'

‘Master Heriot,’ said the Lord Nigel, ‘your favour is generously offered, and shall be frankly accepted. I must presume that you see your way through this business, though I hardly do; for I think you would be grieved to add any fresh burden to me, by persuading me to incur debts which I am not likely to discharge. I will therefore take your money, under the hope and trust that you will enable me to repay you punctually.’

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want inheritors while there are orphan lads in Auld Reekie. I wish you good morrow, my lord.'

'One orphan has cause to thank you already,' said Nigel, as he attended him to the door of his chamber, where, resisting further escort, the old citizen made his escape.

As, in going downstairs, he passed the shop, where Dame Christie stood beeking,¹ he made civil inquiries after her husband. The dame of course regretted his absence; but 'he was down,' she said, 'at Deptford, to settle with a Dutch shipmaster.'

'Our way of business, sir,' she said, 'takes him much from home, and my husband must be the slave of every tarry jacket that wants but a pound of oakum.'

'All business must be minded, dame,' said the goldsmith. 'Make my remembrances — George Heriot of Lombard Street's remembrances — to your goodman. I have dealt with him; he is just and punctual, true to time and engagements. Be kind to your noble guest, and see he wants nothing. Though it be his pleasure at present to lie private and retired, there be those that care for him, and I have a charge to see him supplied; so that you may let me know by your husband, my good dame, how my lord is, and whether he wants aught.'

'And so he is a real lord after all?' said the good dame. 'I am sure I always thought he looked like one. But why does he not go to Parliament, then?'

'He will, dame,' answered Heriot, 'to the Parliament of Scotland, which is his own country.'

'Oh! he is but a Scots lord, then,' said the good dame; 'and that's the thing makes him ashamed to take the title, as they say?'

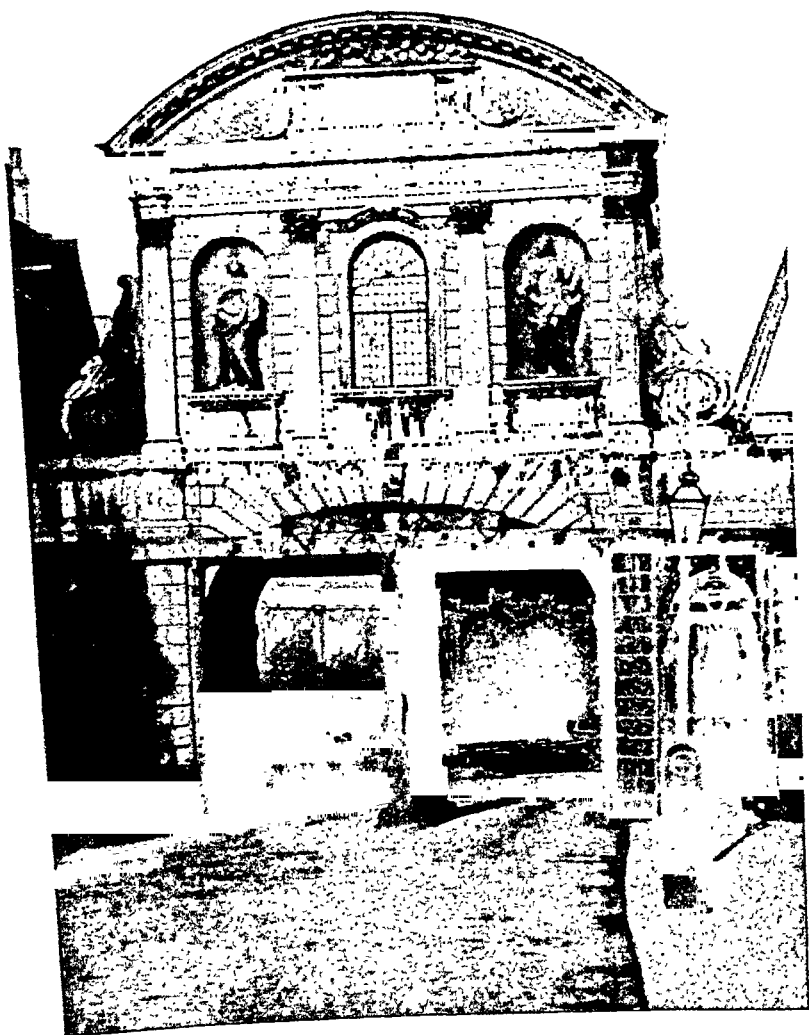
'Let him not hear *you* say so, dame,' replied the citizen.

'Who, I, sir?' answered she; 'no such matter in my thought, sir. Scot or English, he is at any rate a likely man, and a civil man; and rather than he should want anything, I would wait upon him myself, and come as far as Lombard Street to wait upon your worship too.'

'Let your husband come to me, good dame,' said the goldsmith, who, with all his experience and worth, was somewhat of a formalist and disciplinarian. 'The proverb says, "House goes mad when women gad"; and let his lordship's own man wait upon his master in his chamber; it is more seemly. God give ye good morrow.'

'Good morrow to your worship,' said the dame, somewhat

¹ Courtesying.



TEMPLE BAR, LONDON.
From a recent photograph.

CHAPTER V

Wherefore come ye not to court ?
Certain 't is the rarest sport ;
There are silks and jewels glistening,
Prattling fools and wise men listening,
Bullies among brave men justling,
Beggars amongst nobles bustling,
Low-breath'd talkers, minion lispers,
Cutting honest throats by whispers ;
Wherefore come ye not to court ?
Skelton swears 't is glorious sport.

Skelton Skeltonizeth.

IT was not entirely out of parade that the benevolent citizen was mounted and attended in that manner which, as the reader has been informed, excited a gentle degree of spleen on the part of Dame Christie, which, to do her justice, vanished in the little soliloquy which we have recorded. The good man, besides the natural desire to maintain the exterior of a man of worship, was at present bound to Whitehall in order to exhibit a piece of valuable workmanship to King James, which he deemed his Majesty might be pleased to view, or even to purchase. He himself was therefore mounted upon his caparisoned mule, that he might the better make his way through the narrow, dirty, and crowded streets ; and while one of his attendants carried under his arm the piece of plate, wrapped up in red baize, the other two gave an eye to its safety ; for such was the state of the police of the metropolis, that men were often assaulted in the public street for the sake of revenge or of plunder ; and those who apprehended being beset secure themselves by the attendance of armed followers. And this custom, which was at first limited to the nobility and gentry, extended by degrees to those citizens of consideration who, being understood to travel with a charge, as it was called, might otherwise have been selected as safe subjects of plunder by the street-robber.

As Master George Heriot paced forth westward with this gallant attendance, he paused at the shop door of his countryman and friend, the ancient horologer, and having caused Tunstall, who was in attendance, to adjust his watch by the real time, he desired to speak with his master; in consequence of which summons, the old time-meter came forth from his den, his face like a bronze bust, darkened with dust, and glistening here and there with copper filings, and his senses so bemused in the intensity of calculation, that he gazed on his friend the goldsmith for a minute before he seemed perfectly to comprehend who he was, and heard him express his invitation to David Ramsay and pretty Mistress Margaret, his daughter, to dine with him next day at noon, to meet with a noble young countryman, without returning any answer.

‘I’ll make thee speak, with a murrain to thee,’ muttered Heriot to himself; and suddenly changing his tone, he said aloud — ‘I pray you, neighbour David, when are you and I to have a settlement for the bullion wherewith I supplied you to mount yonder hall-clock at Theobald’s; and that other whirling-gig that you made for the Duke of Buckingham? I have had the Spanish house to satisfy for the ingots, and I must needs put you in mind that you have been eight months behind-hand.’

There is something so sharp and *aigre* in the demand of a peremptory dun, that no human tympanum, however inaccessible to other tones, can resist the application. David Ramsay started at once from his reverie, and answered in a pettish tone, ‘Wow, George, man, what needs a’ this din about sax score o’ pounds? A’ the world kens I can answer a’ claims on me, and you proffered yourself fair time, till his maist gracious Majesty and the noble Duke suld make settled accompts wi’ me; and ye may ken, by your ain experience, that I cannæ gang rowting like an unmannered Highland stot to their doors, as ye come to mine.’

Heriot laughed, and replied, ‘Well, David, I see a demand of money is like a bucket of water about your ears, and makes you a man of the world at once. And now, friend, will you tell me, like a Christian man, if you will dine with me to-morrow at noon, and bring pretty Mistress Margaret, my god-daughter, with you, to meet with our noble young countryman, the Lord of Glenvarloch?’

‘The young Lord of Glenvarloch!’ said the old mechanist; ‘wi’ a’ my heart, and blithe I will be to see him again. We

coldly; and, so soon as the adviser was out of hearing, was ungracious enough to mutter, in contempt of his counsel, 'Marry guep of your advice, for an old Scotch tinsmith, as you are! My husband is as wise, and very near as old, as yourself; if I please him, it is well enough; and though he is not just so rich just now as some folks, yet I hope to see him ride upon his moyle, with a foot-cloth, and have his two blue-coats after him, as well as they do.'

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'The young Lord of Glenvarloch!' said the old mechanist; 'wi' a' my heart, and blithe I will be to see him again. We

have not met these forty years : he was twa years before me at the humanity classes ; he is a sweet youth.'

'That was his father — his father — his father ! you old dotard Dot-and-carry-One that you are,' answered the goldsmith. 'A sweet youth he would have been by this time, had he lived, worthy nobleman ! This is his son, the Lord Nigel.'

'His son !' said Ramsay. 'Maybe he will want something of a chronometer, or watch ; few gallants care to be without them nowadays.'

'He may buy half your stock-in-trade, if ever he comes to his own, for what I know,' said his friend ; 'but, Davie, remember your bond, and use me not as you did when my housewife had the sheep's-head and the cock-a-leeky boiling for you as late as two of the clock afternoon.'

'She had the more credit by her cookery,' answered David, now fully awake : 'a sheep's-head over-boiled were poison, according to our saying.'

'Well,' answered Master George, 'but as there will be no sheep's-head to-morrow, it may chance you to spoil a dinner which a proverb cannot mend. It may be you may forgather with your friend, Sir Mungo Malagrowth, for I purpose to ask his worship ; so, be sure and bide tryste, Davie.'

'That will I — I will be true as a chronometer,' said Ramsay.

'I will not trust you, though,' replied Heriot. 'Hear you, Jenkin boy, tell Scots Janet to tell pretty Mistress Margaret, my god-child, she must put her father in remembrance to put on his best doublet to-morrow, and to bring him to Lombard Street at noon. Tell her they are to meet a brave young Scots lord.'

Jenkins coughed that sort of dry short cough uttered by those who are either charged with errands which they do not like, or hear opinions to which they must not enter a dissent.

'Umph !' repeated Master George, who, as we have already noticed, was something of a martinet in domestic discipline — 'what does "umph" mean ? Will you do mine errand or not, sirrah ?'

'Sure, Master George Heriot,' said the apprentice, touching his cap, 'I only meant, that Mistress Margaret was not likely to forget such an invitation.'

'Why, no,' said Master George ; 'she is a dutiful girl to her godfather, though I sometimes call her a jill-flirt. And, hark ye, Jenkin, you and your comrade had best come with your clubs, to see your master and her safely home ; but first shut

shop, and loose the bull-dog, and let the porter stay in the fore-shop till your return. I will send two of my knaves with you ; for I hear these wild youngsters of the Temple are broken out worse and lighter than ever.'

'We can keep their steel in order with good hand-bats,' said Jenkin, 'and never trouble your servants for the matter.'

'Or, if need be,' said Tunstall, 'we have swords as well as the Templars.'

'Fie upon it — fie upon it, young man,' said the citizen. 'An apprentice with a sword ! Marry, Heaven forefend ! I would as soon see him in a hat and feather.'

'Well, sir,' said Jenkin, 'we will find arms fitting to our station, and will defend our master and his daughter, if we should tear up the very stones of the pavement.'

'There spoke a London 'prentice bold !' said the citizen ; 'and, for your comfort, my lads, you shall crush a cup of wine to the health of the fathers of the city. I have my eye on both of you : you are thriving lads, each in his own way. God be wi' you, Davie. Forget not to-morrow at noon.' And so saying, he again turned his mule's head westward, and crossed Temple Bar at that slow and decent amble which at once became his rank and civic importance and put his pedestrian followers to no inconvenience to keep up with him.

At the Temple gate he again paused, dismounted, and sought his way into one of the small booths occupied by scriveners in the neighbourhood. A young man, with lank smooth hair combed straight to his ears and then cropped short, rose, with a cringing reverence, pulled off a slouched hat, which he would upon no signal replace on his head, and answered, with much demonstration of reverence, to the goldsmith's question of, 'How goes business, Andrew?' 'A' the better for your worship's kind countenance and maintenance.'

'Get a large sheet of paper, man, and make a new pen, with a sharp neb and fine hair-stroke. Do not slit the quill up too high, it's a wastrife course in your trade, Andrew : they that do not mind corn-pickles never come to forpits. I have known a learned man write a thousand pages with one quill.'¹

'Ah ! sir,' said the lad, who listened to the goldsmith, though instructing him in his own trade, with an air of veneration and acquiescence, 'how sune ony pur creature like mysell may rise in the world, wi' the instruction of such a man as your worship !'

¹ See Gill's Commentary. Note 9.

‘My instructions are few, Andrew, soon told, and not hard to practise. Be honest — be industrious — be frugal, and you will soon win wealth and worship. Here, copy me this supplication in your best and most formal hand. I will wait by you till it is done.’

The youth lifted not his eye from the paper, and laid not the pen from his hand, until the task was finished to his employer’s satisfaction. The citizen then gave the young scrivener an angel; and bidding him, on his life, be secret in all business entrusted to him, again mounted his mule, and rode on westward along the Strand.

It may be worth while to remind our readers that the Temple Bar which Heriot passed was not the arched screen, or gateway, of the present day; but an open railing, or palisade, which, at night and in times of alarm, was closed with a barricade of posts and chains. The Strand also, along which he rode, was not, as now, a continued street, although it was beginning already to assume that character. It still might be considered as an open road, along the south side of which stood various houses and hotels belonging to the nobility, having gardens behind them down to the water-side, with stairs to the river, for the convenience of taking boat; which mansions have bequeathed the names of their lordly owners to many of the streets leading from the Strand to the Thames. The north side of the Strand was also a long line of houses, behind which, as in St. Martin’s Lane and other points, buildings were rapidly arising; but Covent Garden was still a garden, in the literal sense of the word, or at least but beginning to be studded with irregular buildings. All that was passing around, however, marked the rapid increase of a capital which had long enjoyed peace, wealth, and a regular government. Houses were rising in every direction; and the shrewd eye of our citizen already saw the period not distant which should convert the nearly open highway on which he travelled into a connected and regular street, uniting the court and the town with the city of London.

He next passed Charing Cross, which was no longer the pleasant solitary village at which the judges were wont to breakfast on their way to Westminster Hall, but began to resemble the artery through which, to use Johnson’s expression, ‘pours the full tide of London population.’ The buildings were rapidly increasing, yet scarcely gave even a faint idea of its present appearance.

At last Whitehall¹ received our traveller, who passed under one of the beautiful gates designed by Holbein, and composed of tessellated brick-work, being the same to which Moniplies had profanely likened the West Port of Edinburgh, and entered the ample precincts of the palace of Whitehall, now full of all the confusion attending improvement.

It was just at the time when James — little suspecting that he was employed in constructing a palace from the window of which his only son was to pass in order that he might die upon a scaffold before it — was busied in removing the ancient and ruinous buildings of De Burgh, Henry VIII., and Queen Elizabeth, to make way for the superb architecture on which Inigo Jones exerted all his genius. The King, ignorant of futurity, was now engaged in pressing on his work; and, for that purpose, still maintained his royal apartments at Whitehall, amidst the rubbish of old buildings, and the various confusion attending the erection of the new pile, which formed at present a labyrinth not easily traversed.

The goldsmith to the royal household, and who, if fame spoke true, oftentimes acted as their banker — for these professions were not as yet separated from each other — was a person of too much importance to receive the slightest interruption from sentinel or porter; and, leaving his mule and two of his followers in the outer court, he gently knocked at a postern gate of the building, and was presently admitted, while the most trusty of his attendants followed him closely, with the piece of plate under his arm. This man also he left behind him in an ante-room, where three or four pages in the royal livery, but untrussed, unbuttoned, and dressed more carelessly than the place and nearness to a king's person seemed to admit, were playing at dice and draughts, or stretched upon benches and slumbering with half-shut eyes. A corresponding gallery, which opened from the ante-room, was occupied by two gentlemen-ushers of the chamber, who gave each a smile of recognition as the wealthy goldsmith entered.

No word was spoken on either side; but one of the ushers looked first to Heriot and then to a little door half-covered by the tapestry, which seemed to say, as plain as a look could, 'Lies your business that way?' The citizen nodded; and the court attendant, moving on tiptoe, and with as much caution as if the floor had been paved with eggs, advanced to the door, opened it gently, and spoke a few words in a low tone. The

¹ See Note 10.

broad Scottish accent of King James was heard in reply — ‘ Admit him instanter, Maxwell. Have you hairboured sae lang at the court, and not learned that gold and silver are ever welcome ? ’

The usher signed to Heriot to advance, and the honest citizen was presently introduced into the cabinet of the sovereign.

The scene of confusion amid which he found the King seated was no bad picture of the state and quality of James’s own mind. There was much that was rich and costly in cabinet pictures and valuable ornaments ; but they were arranged in a slovenly manner, covered with dust, and lost half their value, or at least their effect, from the manner in which they were presented to the eye. The table was loaded with huge folios, amongst which lay light books of jest and ribaldry ; and amongst notes of unmercifully long orations and essays on kingcraft were mingled miserable roundels and ballads by the Royal ‘ Prentice, as he styled himself, in the art of poetry, and schemes for the general pacification of Europe, with a list of the names of the King’s hounds, and remedies against canine madness.

His Majesty’s dress was of green velvet, quilted so full as to be dagger-proof, which gave him the appearance of clumsy and ungainly protuberance ; while its being buttoned awry communicated to his figure an air of distortion. Over his green doublet he wore a sad-coloured nightgown, out of the pocket of which peeped his hunting-horn. His high-crowned grey hat lay on the floor, covered with dust, but encircled by a carcanet of large balas rubies ; and he wore a blue velvet nightcap, in the front of which was placed the plume of a heron, which had been struck down by a favourite hawk in some critical moment of the flight, in remembrance of which the King wore this highly honoured feather.

But such inconsistencies in dress and appointments were mere outward types of those which existed in the royal character ; rendering it a subject of doubt amongst his contemporaries, and bequeathing it as a problem to future historians. He was deeply learned, without possessing useful knowledge ; sagacious in many individual cases, without having real wisdom ; fond of his power, and desirous to maintain and augment it, yet willing to resign the direction of that, and of himself, to the most unworthy favourites ; a big and bold assertor of his rights in words, yet one who tamely saw them trampled on in deeds ; a lover of negotiations, in which he was always outwitted ; and one who feared war, where conquest might have been easy. He was fond of his dignity, while he was perpetually degrading it

by undue familiarity ; capable of much public labour, yet often neglecting it for the meanest amusement ; a wit, though a pedant ; and a scholar, though fond of the conversation of the ignorant and uneducated. Even his timidity of temper was not uniform ; and there were moments of his life, and those critical, in which he showed the spirit of his ancestors. He was laborious in trifles, and a trifler where serious labour was required ; devout in his sentiments, and yet too often profane in his language ; just and beneficent by nature, he yet gave way to the iniquities and oppression of others. He was penurious respecting money which he had to give from his own hand, yet inconsiderately and unboundedly profuse of that which he did not see. In a word, those good qualities which displayed themselves in particular cases and occasions were not of a nature sufficiently firm and comprehensive to regulate his general conduct ; and, showing themselves as they occasionally did, only entitled James to the character bestowed on him by Sully : that he was the wisest fool in Christendom.

That the fortunes of this monarch might be as little of a piece as his character, he, certainly the least able of the Stewarts, succeeded peaceably to that kingdom against the power of which his predecessors had, with so much difficulty, defended his native throne ; and, lastly, although his reign appeared calculated to ensure to Great Britain that lasting tranquillity and internal peace which so much suited the King's disposition, yet, during that very reign were sown those seeds of dissension which, like the teeth of the fabulous dragon, had their harvest in a bloody and universal civil war.¹

Such was the monarch who, saluting Heriot by the name of Jingling Geordie, for it was his well-known custom to give nicknames to all those with whom he was on terms of familiarity, inquired 'What new clatter-traps he had brought with him ; to cheat his lawful and native prince out of his siller.'

'God forbid, my liege,' said the citizen, 'that I should have any such disloyal purpose. I did but bring a piece of plate to show to your most gracious Majesty, which, both for the subject and for the workmanship, I were loth to put into the hands of any subject until I knew your Majesty's pleasure anent it.'

'Body o' me, man, let's see it, Heriot ; though, by my saul, Steenie's service o' plate was sae dear a bargain, I had 'maist pawned my word as a royal king to keep my ain gold and silver in future, and let you, Geordie, keep yours.'

¹ See King James. Note 11.

'Respecting the Duke of Buckingham's plate,' said the goldsmith, 'your Majesty was pleased to direct that no expense should be spared, and ——'

'What signifies what I desired, man? when a wise man is with fules and bairns, he maun e'en play at the chucks. But you should have had mair sense and consideration than to gie Baby Charles and Steenie their ain gate; they wad hae floored the very rooms wi' silver, and I wonder they didna.'

George Heriot bowed, and said no more. He knew his master too well to vindicate himself otherwise than by a distant allusion to his order; and James, with whom economy was only a transient and momentary twinge of conscience, became immediately afterwards desirous to see the piece of plate which the goldsmith proposed to exhibit, and despatched Maxwell to bring it to his presence. In the meantime he demanded of the citizen whence he had procured it.

'From Italy, may it please your Majesty,' replied Heriot.

'It has naething in it tending to Papestrie?' said the King, looking graver than his wont.

'Surely not, please your Majesty,' said Heriot; 'I were not wise to bring anything to your presence that had the mark of the beast.'

'You would be the mair beast yourself to do so,' said the King; 'it is weel kend that I wrestled wi' Dagon in my youth, and smote him on the groundsill of his own temple — a gude evidence that I should be in time called, however unworthy, the Defender of the Faith. But here comes Maxwell, bending under his burden, like the golden ass of Apuleius.'

Heriot hastened to relieve the usher, and to place the embossed salver, for such it was, and of extraordinary dimensions, in a light favourable for his Majesty's viewing the sculpture.

'Saul of my body, man,' said the King, 'it is a curious piece, and, as I think, fit for a king's chalmer; and the subject, as you say, Master George, vera adequate and beseeming, being, as I see, the judgment of Solomon — a prince in whose paths it weel becomes a' leeving monarchs to walk with emulation.'

'But whose footsteps,' said Maxwell, 'only one of them — if a subject may say so much — hath ever overtaken.'

'Haud your tongue for a fause fleeching loon!' said the King, but with a smile on his face that showed the flattery had done its part. 'Look at the bonny piece of workmanship, and haud your clavering tongue. And whase handiwork may it be, Geordie?'

'It was wrought, sir,' replied the goldsmith, 'by the famous Florentine, Benvenuto Cellini, and designed for Francis the First of France; but I hope it will find a fitter master.'

'Francis of France!' said the King; 'send Solomon, king of the Jews, to Francis of France! Body of me, man, it would have kythed Cellini mad, had he never done ony thing else out of the gate. Francis! why, he was a fighting fule, man—a mere fighting fule; got himsell ta'en at Pavia, like our ain David at Durham lang syne; if they could hae sent him Solomon's wit, and love of peace, and godliness, they wad hae dune him a better turn. But Solomon should sit in other gate company than Francis of France.'

'I trust that such will be his good fortune,' said Heriot.

'It is a curious and vera artificial sculpture,' said the King, in continuation; 'but yet, methinks, the carnifex, or executioner, there is brandishing his gulley ower near the king's face, seeing he is within reach of his weapon. I think less wisdom than Solomon's wad have taught him that there was danger in edge-tools, and that he wad have bidden the smaik either sheath his shabble or stand farther back.'

George Heriot endeavoured to alleviate this objection by assuring the King that the vicinity betwixt Solomon and the executioner was nearer in appearance than in reality, and that the perspective should be allowed for.

'Gang to the deil wi' your prospective, man,' said the King; 'there canna be a waur prospective for a lawfu' king, wha wishes to reign in lue, and die in peace and honour, than to have naked swords flashing in his een. I am accounted as brave as maist folks; and yet I profess to ye I could never look on a bare blade without blinking and winking. But a'thegither it is a brave piece; and what is the price of it, man?'

The goldsmith replied by observing that it was not his own property, but that of a distressed countryman.

'Whilk you mean to mak your excuse for asking the double of its worth, I warrant?' answered the King. 'I ken the tricks of you burrows-town merchants, man.'

'I have no hopes of baffling your Majesty's sagacity,' said Heriot; 'the piece is really what I say, and the price a hundred and fifty pounds sterling, if it pleases your Majesty to make present payment.'

'A hundred and fifty punds, man! and as mony witches and warlocks to raise them!' said the irritated monarch. 'My saul, Jingling Geordie, ye are minded that your purse shall

jingle to a bonny tune! How am I to tell you down a hundred and fifty puns for what will not weigh as many merks? and ye ken that my very household servitors, and the officers of my mouth, are sax months in arrear!’

The goldsmith stood his ground against all this objurgation, being what he was well accustomed to, and only answered, that if his Majesty liked the piece, and desired to possess it, the price could be easily settled. It was true that the party required the money, but he, George Heriot, would advance it on his Majesty’s account, if such were his pleasure, and wait his royal conveniency for payment, for that and other matters; the money, meanwhile, lying at the ordinary usage.

‘By my honour,’ said James, ‘and that is speaking like an honest and reasonable tradesman. We maun get another subsidy frae the Commons, and that will make ae compting of it. Awa’ wi’ it, Maxwell — awa’ wi’ it, and let it be set where Steenie and Baby Charles shall see it as they return from Richmond. And now that we are secret, my good auld friend Geordie, I do truly opine that, speaking of Solomon and ourselves, the haill wisdom in the country left Scotland when we took our travels to the Southland here.’

George Heriot was courtier enough to say, that ‘The wise naturally follow the wisest, as stags follow their leader.’

‘Troth, I think there is something in what thou sayest,’ said James; ‘for we ourselves, and those of our court and household, as thou thyself, for example, are allowed by the English, for as self-opinioned as they are, to pass for reasonable good wits; but the brains of those we have left behind are all astir, and run clean hirdie-girdie, like sae mony warlocks and witches on the Devil’s Sabbath-e’en.’

‘I am sorry to hear this, my liege,’ said Heriot. ‘May it please your Grace to say what our countrymen have done to deserve such a character?’

‘They are become frantic, man — clean brain-crazed,’ answered the King. ‘I cannot keep them out of the court by all the proclamations that the heralds roar themselves hoarse with. Yesterday, nae farther gane, just as we were mounted and about to ride forth, in rushed a thorough Edinburgh gutter-blood — a ragged rascal, every dud upon whose back was bidding good day to the other, with a coat and hat that would have served a pease-bogle, and, without havings or reverence, thrust into our hands, like a sturdy beggar, some supplication about debts owing by our gracious mother, and sic-like trash; whereat

the horse spangs on end, and but for our admirable sitting, wherein we have been thought to excel maist sovereign princes, as well as subjects, in Europe, I promise you we would have been laid endlang on the causeway.'

'Your Majesty,' said Heriot, 'is their common father, and therefore they are the bolder to press into your gracious presence.'

'I ken I am *pater patriæ* well enough,' said James; 'but one would think they had a mind to squeeze my puddings out, that they may divide the inheritance. Ud's death, Geordie, there is not a loon among them can deliver a supplication as it suld be done in the face of majesty.'

'I would I knew the most fitting and beseeming mode to do so,' said Heriot, 'were it but to instruct our poor countrymen in better fashions.'

'By my halidome,' said the King, 'ye are a ceevileezeed fellow, Geordie, and I carena if I fling awa' as much time as may teach ye. And, first, see you, sir, ye shall approach the presence of majesty thus — shadowing your eyes with your hand, to testify that you are in the presence of the vicegerent of Heaven. Vera weel, George, that is done in a comely manner. Then, sir, ye sall kneel, and make as if ye would kiss the hem of our garment, the latch of our shoe, or such-like. Vera weel enacted. Whilk we, as being willing to be debonair and pleasing towards our lieges, prevent thus — and motion to you to rise; whilk, having a boon to ask, as yet you obey not, but, gliding your hand into your pouch, bring forth your supplication, and place it reverentially in our open palm.' The goldsmith, who had complied with great accuracy with all the prescribed points of the ceremonial, here completed it, to James's no small astonishment, by placing in his hand the petition of the Lord of Glenvarloch. 'What means this, ye fause loon?' said he, reddening and sputtering; 'hae I been teaching you the manual exercise, that ye suld present your piece at our ain royal body? Now, by this light, I had as lief that ye had bended a real pistolet against me, and yet this hae ye done in my very cabinet, where nought suld enter but at my ain pleasure.'

'I trust your Majesty,' said Heriot, as he continued to kneel, 'will forgive my exercising the lesson you condescended to give me in the behalf of a friend?'

'Of a friend!' said the King, 'so much the waur — so much the waur, I tell you. If it had been something to do *yoursell* good there would have been some sense in it, and some chance that you wad not have come back on me in a hurry; but a

man may have a hundred friends, and petitions for every ane of them, ilk ane after other.'

'Your Majesty, I trust,' said Heriot, 'will judge me by former experience, and will not suspect me of such presumption.'

'I kenna,' said the placable monarch; 'the world goes daft, I think — *sed semel insanivimus omnes* — thou art my old and faithful servant, that is the truth; and, were't anything for thy own behoof, man, thou shouldst not ask twice. But, troth, Steenie loves me so dearly that he cares not that any one should ask favours of me but himself. Maxwell (for the usher had re-entered after having carried off the plate), get into the ante-chamber wi' your lang lugs. In conscience, Geordie, I think as that thou hast been mine ain auld fiduciary, and wert my goldsmith when I might say with the ethnic poet — *Non meâ renidet in domo lacunar*; for, faith, they had pillaged my mither's auld house sae, that beechen bickers, and treen trenchers, and latten platters were whiles the best at our board, and glad we were of something to put on them, without quarrelling with the metal of the dishes. D'ye mind, for thou wert in maist of our complots, how we were fain to send sax of the Blue-banders to harry the Lady of Loganhouse's dow-cot and poultry-yard, and what an awfu' plaint the poor dame made against Jock of Milch and the thieves of Annandale, wha were as sackless of the deed as I am of the sin of murder?'

'It was the better for Jock,' said Heriot; 'for, if I remember weel, it saved him from a strapping up at Dumfries, which he had weel deserved for other misdeeds.'

'Ay, man, mind ye that?' said the King; 'but he had other virtues, for he was a tight huntsman, moreover, that Jock of Milch, and could halloo to a hound till all the woods rang again. But he came to an Annandale end at the last, for Lord Torthorwald run his lance out through him. Cocksails, man, when I think of these wild passages, in my conscience, I am not sure but we lived merrier in auld Holyrood in those shifting days than now when we are dwelling at heck and manger. *Cantabit vacuus*: we had but little to care for.'

'And if your Majesty please to remember,' said the goldsmith, 'the awful task we had to gather silver vessail and gold-work enough to make some show before the Spanish ambassador.'

'Vera true,' said the King, now in a full tide of gossip, 'and I mind not the name of the right leal lord that helped us with every unce he had in his house, that his native prince might

have some credit in the eyes of them that had the Indies at their beck.'

'I think, if your Majesty,' said the citizen, 'will cast your eye on the paper in your hand, you will recollect his name.'

'Ay!' said the King, 'say ye sae, man? Lord Glenvarloch, that was his name indeed. *Iustus et tenax propositi*, — a just man, but as obstinate as a baited bull. He stood whiles against us, that Lord Randal Olifaunt of Glenvarloch, but he was a loving and a leal subject in the main. But this supplicator maun be his son — Randal has been long gone where king and lord must go, Geordie, as weel as the like of you — and what does his son want with us?'

'The settlement,' answered the citizen, 'of a large debt due by your Majesty's treasury, for money advanced to your Majesty in great state emergency, about the time of the Raid of Ruthven.'

'I mind the thing weel,' said King James. 'Od's death, man, I was just out of the clutches of the Master of Glamis and his complices, and there was never siller mair welcome to a born prince — the mair the shame and pity that crowned king should need sic a petty sum. But what need he dun us for it, man, like a baxter at the breaking? We aught him the siller, and will pay him wi' our convenience, or make it otherwise up to him, whilk is enow between prince and subject. We are not *in meditatione fugæ*, man, to be arrested thus peremptorily.'

'Alas! an it please your Majesty,' said the goldsmith, shaking his head, 'it is the poor young nobleman's extreme necessity, and not his will, that makes him importunate; for he must have money, and that briefly, to discharge a debt due to Peregrine Peterson, Conservator of the Privileges at Campvere, or his hail hereditary barony and estate of Glenvarloch will be evicted in virtue of an unredeemed wadset.'

'How say ye, man — how say ye?' exclaimed the King, impatiently; 'the carle of a conservator, the son of a Low-Dutch skipper, evict the auld estate and lordship of the house of Olifaunt? God's bread, man, that maun not be: we maun suspend the diligence by writ of favour or otherwise.'

'I doubt that may hardly be,' answered the citizen, 'if it please your Majesty; your learned counsel in the law of Scotland advise that there is no remeid but in paying money.'

'Ud's fish,' said the King, 'let him keep haud by the strong hand against the carle, until we can take some order about his affairs.'

'Alas!' insisted the goldsmith, 'if it like your Majesty, your own pacific government, and your doing of equal justice to all men, has made main force a kittle line to walk by, unless just within the bounds of the Highlands.'

'Weel—weel—weel, man,' said the perplexed monarch, whose ideas of justice, expedience, and convenience became on such occasions strangely embroiled; 'just it is we should pay our debts, that the young man may pay his; and he must be paid, and *in verbo regis* he shall be paid; but how to come by the siller, man, is a difficult chapter. Ye maun try the city, Geordie.'

'To say the truth,' answered Heriot, 'please your gracious Majesty, what betwixt loans, and benevolences, and subsidies, the city is at this present——'

'Dinna tell me of what the city is,' said King James; 'our exchequer is as dry as Dean Giles's discourses on the penitentiary psalms. *Ex nihilo nihil fit*: it's ill taking the breeks aff a wild Highlandman. They that come to me for siller should tell me how to come by it. The city ye maun try, Heriot; and dinna think to be called Jingling Geordie for nothing; and *in verbo regis* I will pay the lad if you get me the loan, I wonnot haggle on the terms; and, between you and me, Geordie, we will redeem the brave auld estate of Glenvarloch. But wherefore comes not the young lord to court, Heriot? Is he comely—is he presentable in the presence?'

'No one can be more so,' said George Heriot; 'but——'

'Ay, I understand ye,' said his Majesty—'I understand ye—*res angusta domi*—puir lad—puir lad! and his father a right true leal Scots heart, though stiff in some opinions. Hark ye, Heriot, let the lad have twa hundred pounds to fit him out. And, here—here (taking the carcanet of rubies from his old hat)—ye have had these in pledge before for a larger sum, ye auld Levite that ye are. Keep them in gage, till I gie ye back the siller out of the next subsidy.'

'If it please your Majesty to give me such directions in writing,' said the cautious citizen.

'The deil is in your nicety, George,' said the King; 'ye are as preceese as a Puritan in form, and a mere Nullifidian in the marrow of the matter. May not a king's word serve you for advancing your pitiful twa hundred pounds?'

'But not for detaining the crown jewels,' said George Heriot.

And the King, who from long experience was inured to dealing with suspicious creditors, wrote an order upon George Heriot, his well-beloved goldsmith and jeweller, for the sum of

two hundred pounds, to be paid presently to Nigel Olifaunt, Lord of Glenvarloch, to be imputed as so much debts due to him by the crown ; and authorising the retention of a carcanet of balas rubies, with a great diamond, as described in a catalogue of his Majesty's jewels, to remain in possession of the said George Heriot, advancer of the said sum, and so forth, until he was lawfully contented and paid thereof. By another rescript, his Majesty gave the said George Heriot directions to deal with some of the monied men, upon equitable terms, for a sum of money for his Majesty's present use, not to be under 50,000 merks, but as much more as could conveniently be procured.

'And has he ony lair, this Lord Nigel of ours?' said the King.

George Heriot could not exactly answer this question ; but believed 'the young lord had studied abroad.'

'He shall have our own advice,' said the King, 'how to carry on his studies to maist advantage ; and it may be we will have him come to court, and study with Steenie and Baby Charles. And, now we think on't, away—away, George ; for the bairns will be coming hame presently, and we would not as yet they kend of this matter we have been treating anent. *Propera pedem*, O Geordie. Clap your mule between your houghs, and god-den with you.'

Thus ended the conference betwixt the gentle King Jamie and his benevolent jeweller and goldsmith.

CHAPTER VI

Oh, I do know him : 't is the mouldy lemon
Which our court wits will wet their lips withal,
When they would sauce their honied conversation
With somewhat sharper flavour. Marry, sir,
That virtue's wellnigh left him : all the juice
That was so sharp and poignant is squeezed out ;
While the poor rind, although as sour as ever,
Must season soon the draff we give our grunterns,
For two-legg'd things are weary on 't.

The Chamberlain, a Comedy.

THE good company invited by the hospitable citizen assembled at his house in Lombard Street at the 'hollow and hungry hour' of noon, to partake of that meal which divides the day ; being about the time when modern persons of fashion, turning themselves upon their pillow, begin to think, not without a great many doubts and much hesitation, that they will by and by commence it. Thither came the young Nigel, arrayed plainly, but in a dress, nevertheless, more suitable to his age and quality than he had formerly worn, accompanied by his servant Moniplies, whose outside also was considerably improved. His solemn and stern features glared forth from under a blue velvet bonnet, fantastically placed sideways on his head ; he had a sound and tough coat of English blue broadcloth, which, unlike his former vestment, would have stood the tug of all the apprentices in Fleet Street. The buckler and broadsword he wore as the arms of his condition, and a neat silver badge, bearing his lord's arms, announced that he was an appendage of aristocracy. He sat down in the good citizen's buttery, not a little pleased to find his attendance upon the table in the hall was likely to be rewarded with his share of a meal such as he had seldom partaken of.

Mr. David Ramsay, that profound and ingenious mechanic, was safely conducted to Lombard Street, according to promise, well washed, brushed, and cleaned from the soot of the furnace

and the forge. His daughter, who came with him, was about twenty years old, very pretty, very demure, yet with lively black eyes, that ever and anon contradicted the expression of sobriety to which silence, reserve, a plain velvet hood, and a cambric ruff had condemned Mistress Marget, as the daughter of a quiet citizen.

There were also two citizens and merchants of London, men ample in cloak and many-linked golden chain, well to pass in the world, and experienced in their craft of merchandise, but who require no particular description. There was an elderly clergyman also, in his gown and cassock, a decent venerable man, partaking in his manners of the plainness of the citizens amongst whom he had his cure.

These may be dismissed with brief notice; but not so Sir Mungo Malagrowth, of Girnigo Castle, who claims a little more attention, as an original character of the time in which he flourished.

That good knight knocked at Master Heriot's door just as the clock began to strike twelve, and was seated in his chair ere the last stroke had chimed. This gave the knight an excellent opportunity of making sarcastic observations on all who came later than himself, not to mention a few rubs at the expense of those who had been so superfluous as to appear earlier.

Having little or no property save his bare designation, Sir Mungo had been early attached to court in the capacity of whipping-boy, as the office was then called, to King James the Sixth, and, with his Majesty, trained to all polite learning by his celebrated preceptor, George Buchanan. The office of whipping-boy doomed its unfortunate occupant to undergo all the corporeal punishment which the Lord's anointed, whose proper person was of course sacred, might chance to incur in the course of travelling through his grammar and prosody. Under the stern rule, indeed, of George Buchanan, who did not approve of the vicarious mode of punishment, James bore the penance of his own faults, and Mungo Malagrowth enjoyed a sinecure; but James's other pedagogue, Master Peter Young, went more ceremoniously to work, and appalled the very soul of the youthful King by the floggings which he bestowed on the whipping-boy, when the royal task was not suitably performed. And be it told to Sir Mungo's praise, that there were points about him in the highest respect suited to his official situation. He had even in youth a naturally

irregular and grotesque set of features, which, when distorted by fear, pain, and anger, looked like one of the whimsical faces which present themselves in a Gothic cornice. His voice also was high-pitched and querulous, so that, when smarting under Master Peter Young's unsparing inflictions, the expression of his grotesque physiognomy, and the superhuman yells which he uttered, were well suited to produce all the effects on the monarch who deserved the lash that could possibly be produced by seeing another and an innocent individual suffering for his delict.

Sir Mungo Malagrowth, for such he became, thus got an early footing at court, which another would have improved and maintained. But, when he grew too big to be whipped, he had no other means of rendering himself acceptable. A bitter, caustic, and backbiting humour, a malicious wit, and an envy of others more prosperous than the possessor of such amiable qualities, have not, indeed, always been found obstacles to a courtier's rise; but then they must be amalgamated with a degree of selfish cunning and prudence of which Sir Mungo had no share. His satire ran riot, his envy could not conceal itself, and it was not long after his majority till he had as many quarrels upon his hands as would have required a cat's nine lives to answer. In one of these rencontres he received, perhaps we should say fortunately, a wound which served him as an excuse for answering no invitations of the kind in future. Sir Rullion Rattray of Ranagullion cut off, in mortal combat, three of the fingers of his right hand, so that Sir Mungo never could hold sword again. At a later period, having written some satirical verses upon the Lady Cockpen, he received so severe a chastisement from some persons employed for the purpose, that he was found half dead on the spot where they had thus dealt with him, and one of his thighs having been broken, and ill set, gave him a hitch in his gait, with which he hobbled to his grave. The lameness of his leg and hand, besides that they added considerably to the grotesque appearance of this original, procured him in future a personal immunity from the more dangerous consequences of his own humour; and he gradually grew old in the service of the court, in safety of life and limb, though without either making friends or attaining preferment. Sometimes, indeed, the King was amused with his caustic sallies, but he had never art enough to improve the favourable opportunity; and his enemies, who were, for that matter, the whole court, always found

means to throw him out of favour again. The celebrated Archie Armstrong offered Sir Mungo, in his generosity, a skirt of his own fool's coat, proposing thereby to communicate to him the privileges and immunities of a professed jester. 'For,' said the man of motley, 'Sir Mungo, as he goes on just now, gets no more for a good jest than just the King's pardon for having made it.'

Even in London, the golden shower which fell around him did not moisten the blighted fortunes of Sir Mungo Malagrowth. He grew old, deaf, and peevish; lost even the spirit which had formerly animated his strictures; and was barely endured by James, who, though himself nearly as far stricken in years, retained, to an unusual and even an absurd degree, the desire to be surrounded by young people.

Sir Mungo, thus fallen into the yellow leaf of years and fortune, showed his emaciated form and faded embroidery at court as seldom as his duty permitted; and spent his time in indulging his food for satire in the public walks and in the aisles of St. Paul's, which were then the general resort of news-mongers and characters of all descriptions, associating himself chiefly with such of his countrymen as he accounted of inferior birth and rank to himself. In this manner, hating and contemning commerce and those who pursued it, he nevertheless lived a good deal among the Scottish artists and merchants who had followed the court to London. To these he could show his cynicism without much offence; for some submitted to his jeers and ill-humour in deference to his birth and knight-hood, which in those days conferred high privileges; and others, of more sense, pitied and endured the old man, unhappy alike in his fortunes and his temper.

Amongst the latter was George Heriot, who, though his habits and education induced him to carry aristocratical feelings to a degree which would now be thought extravagant, had too much spirit and good sense to permit himself to be intruded upon to an unauthorised excess, or used with the slightest improper freedom, by such a person as Sir Mungo, to whom he was, nevertheless, not only respectfully civil, but essentially kind, and even generous.

Accordingly, this appeared from the manner in which Sir Mungo Malagrowth conducted himself upon entering the apartment. He paid his respects to Master Heriot, and a decent, elderly, somewhat severe-looking female, in a coif, who, by the name of Aunt Judith, did the honours of his house and

table, with little or no portion of the supercilious acidity which his singular physiognomy assumed when he made his bow successively to David Ramsay and the two sober citizens. He thrust himself into the conversation of the latter, to observe he had heard in Paul's that the bankrupt concern of Pindivide, a great merchant, 'who,' as he expressed it, 'had given the crows a pudding,' and on whom he knew, from the same authority, each of the honest citizens had some unsettled claim, was like to prove a total loss — 'stock and block, ship and cargo, keel and rigging, all lost, now and for ever.'

The two citizens grinned at each other; but, too prudent to make their private affairs the subject of public discussion, drew their heads together, and evaded farther conversation by speaking in a whisper.

The old Scots knight next attacked the watchmaker with the same disrespectful familiarity. 'Davie,' he said — 'Davie, ye donnard auld idiot, have ye no gane mad yet, with applying your mathematical science, as ye call it, to the Book of Apocalypse? I expected to have heard ye make out the sign of the beast as clear as a tout on a bawbee whistle.'

'Why, Sir Mungo,' said the mechanist, after making an effort to recall to his recollection what had been said to him, and by whom, 'it may be that ye are nearer the mark than ye are yoursell aware of; for, taking the ten horns o' the beast, ye may easily estimate by your digitals —'

'My digits! you d—d auld, rusty, good-for-nothing time-piece!' exclaimed Sir Mungo, while, betwixt jest and earnest, he laid on his hilt his hand, or rather his claw, for Sir Rullion's broadsword had abridged it into that form. 'D'ye mean to upbraid me with my mutilation?'

Master Heriot interfered. 'I cannot persuade our friend David,' he said, 'that Scriptural prophecies are intended to remain in obscurity until their unexpected accomplishment shall make, as in former days, that fulfilled which was written. But you must not exert your knightly valour on him for all that.'

'By my saul, and it would be throwing it away,' said Sir Mungo, laughing. 'I would as soon set out, with hound and horn, to hunt a sturdied sheep; for he is in a doze again, and up to the chin in numerals, quotients, and dividends. Mistress Margaret, my pretty honey,' for the beauty of the young citizen made even Sir Mungo Malagrowther's grim features relax themselves a little, 'is your father always as entertaining as he seems just now?'

Mistress Margaret simpered, bridled, looked to either side, then straight before her; and, having assumed all the airs of bashful embarrassment and timidity which were necessary, as she thought, to cover a certain shrewd readiness which really belonged to her character, at length replied, 'That indeed her father was very thoughtful, but she had heard that he took the habit of mind from her grandfather.'

'Your grandfather!' said Sir Mungo, after doubting if he had heard her aright. 'Said she her grandfather! The lassie is distraught! I ken nae wench on this side of Temple Bar that is derived from so distant a relation.'

'She has got a godfather, however, Sir Mungo,' said George Heriot, again interfering; 'and I hope you will allow him interest enough with you to request you will not put his pretty god-child to so deep a blush.'

'The better—the better,' said Sir Mungo. 'It is a credit to her that, bred and born within the sound of Bow Bell, she can blush for anything; and, by my saul, Master George,' he continued, chucking the irritated and reluctant damsel under the chin, 'she is bonny enough to make amends for her lack of ancestry—at least, in such a region as Cheapside, where, d'ye mind me, the kettle cannot call the porridge-pot——'

The damsel blushed, but not so angrily as before. Master George Heriot hastened to interrupt the conclusion of Sir Mungo's homely proverb, by introducing him personally to Lord Nigel.

Sir Mungo could not at first understand what his host said—'Bread of Heaven, what say ye, man?'

Upon the name of Nigel Olifaunt, Lord Glenvarloch, being again hallooed into his ear, he drew up, and, regarding his entertainer with some austerity, rebuked him for not making persons of quality acquainted with each other, that they might exchange courtesies before they mingled with other folks. He then made as handsome and courtly a congee to his new acquaintance as a man maimed in foot and hand could do; and, observing he had known my lord, his father, bid him welcome to London, and hoped he should see him at court.

Nigel in an instant comprehended, as well from Sir Mungo's manner as from a strict compression of their entertainer's lips, which intimated the suppression of a desire to laugh, that he was dealing with an original of no ordinary description, and accordingly returned his courtesy with suitable punctiliousness. Sir Mungo, in the meanwhile, gazed on him with much earnest-

ness ; and, as the contemplation of natural advantages was as odious to him as that of wealth or other adventitious benefits, he had no sooner completely perused the handsome form and good features of the young lord, than, like one of the comforters of the Man of Uz, he drew close up to him, to enlarge on the former grandeur of the Lords of Glenvarloch, and the regret with which he had heard that their representative was not likely to possess the domains of his ancestry. Anon, he enlarged upon the beauties of the principal mansion of Glenvarloch ; the commanding site of the old castle ; the noble expanse of the lake, stocked with wild-fowl for hawking ; the commanding screen of forest, terminating in a mountain-ridge abounding with deer ; and all the other advantages of that fine and ancient barony, till Nigel, in spite of every effort to the contrary, was unwillingly obliged to sigh.

Sir Mungo, skilful in discerning when the withers of those he conversed with were wrung, observed that his new acquaintance winced, and would willingly have pressed the discussion ; but the cook's impatient knock upon the dresser with the haft of his dudgeon-knife now gave a signal loud enough to be heard from the top of the house to the bottom, summoning, at the same time, the serving-men to place the dinner upon the table and the guests to partake of it.

Sir Mungo, who was an admirer of good cheer—a taste which, by the way, might have some weight in reconciling his dignity to these city visits—was tolled off by the sound, and left Nigel and the other guests in peace, until his anxiety to arrange himself in his due place of pre-eminence at the genial board was duly gratified. Here, seated on the left hand of Aunt Judith, he beheld Nigel occupy the station of yet higher honour on the right, dividing that matron from pretty Mistress Margaret ; but he saw this with the more patience, that there stood betwixt him and the young lord a superb larded capon.

The dinner proceeded according to the form of the times. All was excellent of the kind ; and, besides the Scottish cheer promised, the board displayed beef and pudding, the statutory dainties of Old England. A small cupboard of plate, very choicely and beautifully wrought, did not escape the compliments of some of the company, and an oblique sneer from Sir Mungo, as intimating the owner's excellence in his own mechanical craft.

'I am not ashamed of the workmanship, Sir Mungo,' said

the honest citizen. 'They say, a good cook knows how to lick his own fingers; and, methinks, it were unseemly that I, who have furnished half the cupboards in broad Britain, should have my own covered with paltry pewter.'

The blessing of the clergyman now left the guests at liberty to attack what was placed before them; and the meal went forward with great decorum, until Aunt Judith, in farther recommendation of the capon, assured her company that it was of a celebrated breed of poultry which she had herself brought from Scotland.

'Then, like some of his countrymen, madam,' said the pitiless Sir Mungo, not without a glance towards his landlord, 'he has been well larded in England.'

'There are some others of his countrymen,' answered Master Heriot, 'to whom all the lard in England has not been able to render that good office.'

Sir Mungo sneered and reddened, the rest of the company laughed; and the satirist, who had his reasons for not coming to extremity with Master George, was silent for the rest of the dinner.

The dishes were exchanged for confections and wine of the highest quality and flavour; and Nigel saw the entertainments of the wealthiest burgomasters which he had witnessed abroad fairly outshone by the hospitality of a London citizen. Yet there was nothing ostentatious, or which seemed inconsistent with the degree of an opulent burgher.

While the collation proceeded, Nigel, according to the good-breeding of the time, addressed his discourse principally to Mrs. Judith; whom he found to be a woman of a strong Scottish understanding, more inclined towards the Puritans than was her brother George (for in that relation she stood to him, though he always called her aunt), attached to him in the strongest degree, and sedulously attentive to all his comforts. As the conversation of this good dame was neither lively nor fascinating, the young lord naturally addressed himself next to the old horologer's very pretty daughter, who sat upon his right hand. From her, however, there was no extracting any reply beyond the measure of a monosyllable; and when the young gallant had said the best and most complaisant things which his courtesy supplied, the smile that mantled upon her pretty mouth was so slight and evanescent as scarce to be discernible.

Nigel was beginning to tire of his company, for the old citizens were speaking with his host of commercial matters in

language to him totally unintelligible, when Sir Mungo Malagrowth suddenly summoned their attention.

That amiable personage had for some time withdrawn from the company into the recess of a projecting window, so formed and placed as to command a view of the door of the house and of the street. This situation was probably preferred by Sir Mungo on account of the number of objects which the streets of a metropolis usually offer of a kind congenial to the thoughts of a splenetic man. What he had hitherto seen passing there was probably of little consequence; but now a trampling of horse was heard without, and the knight suddenly exclaimed, 'By my faith, Master George, you had better go look to shop; for here comes Knighton, the Duke of Buckingham's groom, and two fellows after him, as if he were my lord duke himself.'

'My cash-keeper is below,' said Heriot, without disturbing himself, 'and he will let me know if his Grace's commands require my immediate attention.'

'Umph! cash-keeper!' muttered Sir Mungo to himself; 'he would have had an easy office when I first kend ye. But,' said he, speaking aloud, 'will you not come to the window, at least? for Knighton has trundled a piece of silver plate into your house — ha! ha! ha! — trundled it upon its edge, as a callan' would drive a hoop. I cannot help laughing — ha! ha! ha! — at the fellow's impudence.'

'I believe you could not help laughing,' said George Heriot, rising up and leaving the room, 'if your best friend lay dying.'

'Bitter that, my lord — ha?' said Sir Mungo, addressing Nigel. 'Our friend is not a goldsmith for nothing: he hath no leaden wit. But I will go down and see what comes on 't.'

Heriot, as he descended the stairs, met his cash-keeper coming up, with some concern in his face. 'Why, how now, Roberts,' said the goldsmith, 'what means all this, man?'

'It is Knighton, Master Heriot, from the court — Knighton, the duke's man. He brought back the salver you carried to Whitehall, flung it into the entrance as if it had been an old pewter platter, and bade me tell you, the King would have none of your trumpery.'

'Ay, indeed!' said George Heriot. 'None of my trumpery! Come hither into the compting-room, Roberts. Sir Mungo,' he added, bowing to the knight, who had joined, and was preparing to follow, them, 'I pray your forgiveness for an instant.'

In virtue of this prohibition, Sir Mungo, who, as well as the rest of the company, had overheard what passed betwixt George

Heriot and his cash-keeper, saw himself condemned to wait in the outer business-room, where he would have endeavoured to slake his eager curiosity by questioning Knighton; but that emissary of greatness, after having added to the uncivil message of his master some rudeness of his own, had again scampered westward, with his satellites at his heels.'

In the meanwhile, the name of the Duke of Buckingham, the omnipotent favourite both of the King and the Prince of Wales, had struck some anxiety into the party which remained in the great parlour. He was more feared than beloved, and, if not absolutely of a tyrannical disposition, was accounted haughty, violent, and vindictive. It pressed on Nigel's heart that he himself, though he could not conceive how nor why, might be the original cause of the resentment of the duke against his benefactor. The others made their comments in whispers, until the sounds reached Ramsay, who had not heard a word of what had previously passed, but, plunged in those studies with which he connected every other incident and event, took up only the catchword, and replied — 'The Duke — the Duke of Buckingham — George Villiers; ay, I have spoke with Lambe about him.'

'Our Lord and our Lady! Now, how can you say so, father?' said his daughter, who had shrewdness enough to see that her father was touching upon dangerous ground.

'Why, ay, child,' answered Ramsay; 'the stars do but incline, they cannot compel. But well you wot, it is commonly said of his Grace, by those who have the skill to cast nativities, that there was a notable conjunction of Mars and Saturn, the apparent or true time of which, reducing the calculations of Eichstadius made for the latitude of Oranienburgh to that of London, gives seven hours, fifty-five minutes, and forty-one seconds —'

'Hold your peace, old soothsayer,' said Heriot, who at that instant entered the room with a calm and steady countenance. 'Your calculations are true and undeniable when they regard brass and wire and mechanical force; but future events are at the pleasure of Him who bears the hearts of kings in His hands.'

'Ay, but, George,' answered the watchmaker, 'there was a concurrence of signs at this gentleman's birth which showed his course would be a strange one. Long has it been said of him, he was born at the very meeting of night and day, and under crossing and contending influences that may affect both us and him.'

Full moon and high sea,
Great man shalt thou be ;
Red dawning, stormy sky,
Bloody death shalt thou die.'

'It is not good to speak of such things,' said Heriot, 'especially of the great : stone walls have ears, and a bird of the air shall carry the matter.'

Several of the guests seemed to be of their host's opinion. The two merchants took brief leave, as if under consciousness that something was wrong. Mistress Margaret, her body-guard of 'prentices being in readiness, plucked her father by the sleeve, and, rescuing him from a brown study (whether referring to the wheels of Time or to that of Fortune, is uncertain), wished good-night to her friend Mrs. Judith, and received her godfather's blessing, who, at the same time, put upon her slender finger a ring of much taste and some value ; for he seldom suffered her to leave him without some token of his affection. Thus honourably dismissed, and accompanied by her escort, she set forth on her return to Fleet Street.

Sir Mungo had bid adieu to Master Heriot as he came out from the back compting-room ; but such was the interest which he took in the affairs of his friend, that, when Master George went upstairs, he could not help walking into that *sanctum sanctorum* to see how Master Roberts was employed. The knight found the cash-keeper busy in making extracts from those huge brass-clasped, leathern-bound manuscript folios which are the pride and trust of dealers, and the dread of customers whose year of grace is out. The good knight leant his elbows on the desk, and said to the functionary in a condoling tone of voice — 'What ! you have lost a good customer, I fear, Master Roberts, and are busied in making out his bill of charges ?'

Now, it chanced that Roberts, like Sir Mungo himself, was a little deaf, and, like Sir Mungo, knew also how to make the most of it ; so that he answered at cross purposes — 'I humbly crave your pardon, Sir Mungo, for not having sent in your bill of charge sooner, but my master bade me not disturb you. I will bring the items together in a moment.' So saying, he began to turn over the leaves of his book of fate, murmuring, 'Repairing ane silver seal — new clasp to his chain of office — ane over-gilt brooch to his hat, being a St. Andrew's cross, with thistles — a copper gilt pair of spurs, — this to Daniel Driver, we not dealing in the article.'

He would have proceeded ; but Sir Mungo, not prepared to endure the recital of the catalogue of his own petty debts, and still less willing to satisfy them on the spot, wished the book-keeper, cavalierly, good-night, and left the house without farther ceremony. The clerk looked after him with a civil city sneer, and immediately resumed the more serious labours which Sir Mungo's intrusion had interrupted.

¹ See Sir Mungo Malagrowth. Note 12.

CHAPTER VII

Things needful we have thought on ; but the thing
Of all most needful — that which Scripture terms,
As if alone it merited regard,
The ONE thing needful — that's yet unconsider'd.

The Chamberlain.

WHEN the rest of the company had taken their departure from Master Heriot's house, the young Lord of Glenvarloch also offered to take leave ; but his host detained him for a few minutes, until all were gone excepting the clergyman.

'My lord,' then said the worthy citizen, 'we have had our permitted hour of honest and hospitable pastime, and now I would fain delay you for another and graver purpose, as it is our custom, when we have the benefit of good Mr. Windsor's company, that he reads the prayers of the church for the evening before we separate. Your excellent father, my lord, would not have departed before family worship ; I hope the same from your lordship.'

'With pleasure, sir,' answered Nigel ; 'and you add in the invitation an additional obligation to those with which you have loaded me. When young men forget what is their duty, they owe deep thanks to the friend who will remind them of it.'

While they talked together in this manner, the serving-men had removed the folding-tables, brought forward a portable reading-desk, and placed chairs and hassocks for their master, their mistress, and the noble stranger. Another low chair, or rather a sort of stool, was placed close beside that of Master Heriot ; and though the circumstance was trivial, Nigel was induced to notice it, because, when about to occupy that seat, he was prevented by a sign from the old gentleman, and motioned to another of somewhat more elevation. The clergyman took his station behind the reading-desk. The domestics, a numerous family both of clerks and servants, including

Moniplies, attended with great gravity, and were accommodated with benches.

The household were all seated, and, externally at least, composed to devout attention, when a low knock was heard at the door of the apartment; Mistress Judith looked anxiously at her brother, as if desiring to know his pleasure. He nodded his head gravely, and looked to the door. Mistress Judith immediately crossed the chamber, opened the door, and led into the apartment a beautiful creature, whose sudden and singular appearance might have made her almost pass for an apparition. She was deadly pale: there was not the least shade of vital red to enliven features which were exquisitely formed, and might, but for that circumstance, have been termed transcendently beautiful. Her long black hair fell down over her shoulders and down her back, combed smoothly and regularly, but without the least appearance of decoration or ornament, which looked very singular at a period when head-gear, as it was called, of one sort or other was generally used by all ranks. Her dress was of pure white, of the simplest fashion, and hiding all her person excepting the throat, face, and hands. Her form was rather beneath than above the middle size, but so justly proportioned and elegantly made, that the spectator's attention was entirely withdrawn from her size. In contradiction of the extreme plainness of all the rest of her attire, she wore a necklace which a duchess might have envied, so large and lustrous were the brilliants of which it was composed; and around her waist a zone of rubies of scarce inferior value.

When this singular figure entered the apartment, she cast her eyes on Nigel, and paused, as if uncertain whether to advance or retreat. The glance which she took of him seemed to be one rather of uncertainty and hesitation than of bashfulness or timidity. Aunt Judith took her by the hand and led her slowly forward; her dark eyes, however, continued to be fixed on Nigel, with an expression of melancholy by which he felt strangely affected. Even when she was seated on the vacant stool, which was placed there probably for her accommodation, she again looked on him more than once with the same pensive, lingering, and anxious expression, but without either shyness or embarrassment, not even so much as to call the slightest degree of complexion into her cheek.

So soon as this singular female had taken up the prayer-book which was laid upon her cushion, she seemed immersed in devotional duty; and although Nigel's attention to the

service was so much disturbed by this extraordinary apparition that he looked towards her repeatedly in the course of the service, he could never observe that her eyes or her thoughts strayed so much as a single moment from the task in which she was engaged. Nigel himself was less attentive, for the appearance of this lady seemed so extraordinary, that, strictly as he had been bred up by his father to pay the most reverential attention during performance of divine service, his thoughts in spite of himself were disturbed by her presence, and he earnestly wished the prayers were ended, that his curiosity might obtain some gratification. When the service was concluded, and each had remained, according to the decent and edifying practice of the church, concentrated in mental devotion for a short space, the mysterious visitant arose ere any other person stirred; and Nigel remarked that none of the domestics left their places, or even moved, until she had first kneeled on one knee to Heriot, who seemed to bless her with his hand laid on her head, and a melancholy solemnity of look and action; she then bended her body, but without kneeling, to Mistress Judith; and having performed these two acts of reverence, she left the room; yet just in the act of her departure, she once more turned her penetrating eyes on Nigel with a fixed look, which compelled him to turn his own aside. When he looked towards her again, he saw only the skirt of her white mantle as she left the apartment.

The domestics then rose and dispersed themselves; wine, and fruit, and spices, were offered to Lord Nigel and to the clergyman, and the latter took his leave. The young lord would fain have accompanied him, in hope to get some explanation of the apparition which he had beheld, but he was stopped by his host, who requested to speak with him in his compting-room.

‘I hope, my lord,’ said the citizen, ‘that your preparations for attending court are in such forwardness that you can go thither the day after to-morrow. It is, perhaps, the last day, for some time, that his Majesty will hold open court for all who have pretensions by birth, rank, or office to attend upon him. On the subsequent day he goes to Theobald’s, where he is so much occupied with hunting and other pleasures that he cares not to be intruded on.’

‘I shall be in all outward readiness to pay my duty,’ said the young nobleman, ‘yet I have little heart to do it. The friends from whom I ought to have found encouragement and protection have proved cold and false: I certainly will not trouble

them for their countenance on this occasion; and yet I must confess my childish unwillingness to enter quite alone upon so new a scene.'

'It is bold of a mechanic like me to make such an offer to a nobleman,' said Heriot; 'but I must attend at court [the day after] to-morrow. I can accompany you as far as the presence-chamber, from my privilege as being of the household. I can facilitate your entrance, should you find difficulty, and I can point out the proper manner and time of approaching the King. But I do not know,' he added, smiling, 'whether these little advantages will not be overbalanced by the incongruity of a nobleman receiving them from the hands of an old smith.'

'From the hands rather of the only friend I have found in London,' said Nigel, offering his hand.

'Nay, if you think of the matter in that way,' replied the honest citizen, 'there is no more to be said; I will come for you [the day after] to-morrow with a barge proper to the occasion. But remember, my good young lord, that I do not, like some men of my degree, wish to take opportunity to step beyond it and associate with my superiors in rank, and therefore do not fear to mortify my presumption by suffering me to keep my distance in the presence, and where it is fitting for both of us to separate; and for what remains, most truly happy shall I be in proving of service to the son of my ancient patron.'

The style of conversation led so far from the point which had interested the young nobleman's curiosity, that there was no returning to it that night. He therefore exchanged thanks and greeting with George Heriot, and took his leave, promising to be equipped and in readiness to embark with him on the second successive morning at ten o'clock.

The generation of linkboys, celebrated by Count Anthony Hamilton as peculiar to London, had already, in the reign of James I., begun their functions, and the service of one of them with his smoky torch had been secured to light the young Scottish lord and his follower to their own lodgings, which, though better acquainted than formerly with the city, they might in the dark have run some danger of missing. This gave the ingenious Mr. Moniplies an opportunity of gathering close up to his master, after he had gone through the form of slipping his left arm into the handle of his buckler, and loosening his broadsword in the sheath, that he might be ready for whatever should befall.

'If it were not for the wine and the good cheer which we

have had in yonder old man's house, my lord,' said the sapient follower, 'and that I ken him by report to be a just living man in many respects, and a real Edinburgh gutterblood, I should have been well pleased to have seen how his feet were shaped, and whether he had not a cloven cloot under the braw roses and cordovan shoon of his.'

'Why, you rascal,' answered Nigel, 'you have been too kindly treated, and now that you have filled your ravenous stomach, you are railing on the good gentleman that relieved you.'

'Under favour, no, my lord,' said Moniplies; 'I would only like to see something mair about him. I have eaten his meat, it is true — more shame that the like of him should have meat to give, when your lordship and me could scarce have gotten, on our own account, brose and a bear bannock. I have drunk his wine, too.'

'I see you have,' replied his master, 'a great deal more than you should have done.'

'Under your patience, my lord,' said Moniplies, 'you are pleased to say that, because I crushed a quart with that jolly boy Jenkin, as they call the 'prentice boy, and that was out of mere acknowledgment for his former kindness. I own that I, moreover, sung the good old song of "Elsie Marley," so as they never heard it chanted in their lives.'

'And withal,' as John Bunyan says, 'as they went on their way,' he sung —

'Oh, do ye ken Elsie Marley, honey —
The wife that sells the barley, honey?
For Elsie Marley's gown sae fine,
She winna get up to feed the swine.
Oh, do ye ken ——'

Here in mid career was the songster interrupted by the stern gripe of his master, who threatened to baton him to death if he brought the city-watch upon them by his ill-timed melody.

'I crave pardon, my lord — I humbly crave pardon — only when I think of that Jen Win, as they call him, I can hardly help humming, "Oh, do ye ken ——" But I crave your honour's pardon, and will be totally dumb, if you command me so.'

'No, sirrah!' said Nigel, 'talk on, for I well know you would say and suffer more under pretence of holding your peace than when you get an unbridled license. How is it, then? What have you to say against Master Heriot?'

It seems more than probable that, in permitting this license,

the young lord hoped his attendant would stumble upon the subject of the young lady who had appeared at prayers in a manner so mysterious. But whether this was the case, or whether he merely desired that Moniplies should utter, in a subdued and under tone of voice, those spirits which might otherwise have vented themselves in obstreperous song, it is certain he permitted his attendant to proceed with his story in his own way.

‘And therefore,’ said the orator, availing himself of his immunity, ‘I would like to ken what sort of a carle this Maister Heriot is. He hath supplied your lordship with walth of gold, as I can understand; and if he has, I make it for certain he hath had his ain end in it, according to the fashion of the world. Now, had your lordship your own good lands at your guiding, doubtless this person, with most of his craft—goldsmiths they call themselves, I say usurers—wad be glad to exchange so many pounds of African dust, by whilk I understand gold, against so many fair acres, and hundreds of acres, of broad Scottish land.’

‘But you know I have no land,’ said the young lord, ‘at least none that can be affected by any debt which I can at present become obliged for. I think you need not have reminded me of that.’

‘True, my lord—most true; and, as your lordship says, open to the meanest capacity, without any unnecessary expositions. Now, therefore, my lord, unless Maister George Heriot has something mair to allege as a motive for his liberality, vera different from the possession of your estate, and moreover, as he could gain little by the capture of your body, wherefore should it not be your soul that he is in pursuit of?’

‘My soul, you rascal!’ said the young lord; ‘what good should my soul do him?’

‘What do I ken about that?’ said Moniplies. ‘They go about roaring and seeking whom they may devour; doubtless, they like the food that they rage so much about; and, my lord, they say,’ added Moniplies, drawing up still closer to his master’s side—‘they say that Master Heriot has one spirit in his house already.’

‘How or what do you mean?’ said Nigel. ‘I will break your head, you drunken knave, if you palter with me any longer.’

‘Drunken!’ answered his trusty adherent, ‘and is this the story? Why, how could I but drink your lordship’s health on my bare knees, when Master Jenkin began it to me? Hang them that would not! I would have cut the impudent knave’s hams

with my broadsword, that should make scruple of it, and so have made him kneel when he should have found it difficult to rise again. But touching the spirit,' he proceeded, finding that his master made no answer to his valorous tirade, 'your lordship has seen her with your own eyes.'

'I saw no spirit,' said Glenvarloch, but yet breathing thick as one who expects some singular disclosure; 'what mean you by a spirit?'

'You saw a young lady come in to prayers, that spoke not a word to any one, only made becks and bows to the old gentleman and lady of the house — ken ye wha she is?'

'No, indeed,' answered Nigel; 'some relation of the family, I suppose?'

'Deil a bit — deil a bit,' answered Moniplies, hastily — 'not a blood-drop's kin to them, if she had a drop of blood in her body. I tell you but what all human beings allege to be truth, that dwell within hue and cry of Lombard Street — that lady, or quean, or whatever you choose to call her, has been dead in the body these many a year, though she haunts them, as we have seen, even at their very devotions.'

'You will allow her to be a good spirit at least,' said Nigel Olifaunt, 'since she chooses such a time to visit her friends?'

'For that I kenna, my lord,' answered the superstitious follower. 'I ken no spirit that would have faced the right down hammer-blow of Mess John Knox, whom my father stood by in his very warst days, bating a chance time when the court, which my father supplied with butcher-meat, was against him. But you divine has another airt from powerful Master Rollock, and Mess David Black of North Leith, and sic-like. Alack-a-day! wha can ken, if it please your lordship, whether sic prayers as the Southron read out of their auld blethering black mess-book there may not be as powerful to invite fiends as a right red-het prayer warm frae the heart may be powerful to drive them away, even as the Evil Spirit was driven by the smell of the fish's liver from the bridal-chamber of Sara, the daughter of Raguel? as to whilk story, nevertheless, I make scruple to say whether it be truth or not, better men than I am having doubted on that matter.'

'Well — well — well,' said his master, impatiently, 'we are now near home, and I have permitted you to speak of this matter for once, that we may have an end of your prying folly and your idiotical superstitions for ever. For whom do you, or your absurd authors or informers, take this lady?'

'I can say naething preceesely as to that,' answered Moniplies; 'certain it is her body died and was laid in the grave many a day since, notwithstanding she still wanders on earth, and chiefly amongst Maister Heriot's family, though she hath been seen in other places by them that well knew her. But who she is, I will not warrant to say, or how she becomes attached, like a Highland Brownie, to some peculiar family. They say she has a row of apartments of her own, ante-room, parlour, and bedroom; but deil a bed she sleeps in but her own coffin, and the walls, doors, and windows are so chinked up as to prevent the least blink of daylight from entering; and then she dwells by torchlight——'

'To what purpose, if she be a spirit?' said Nigel Olifaunt.

'How can I tell your lordship?' answered his attendant. 'I thank God, I know nothing of her likings or mislikings; only her coffin is there, and I leave your lordship to guess what a live person has to do with a coffin. As little as a ghost with a lantern, I trow.'

'What reason,' repeated Nigel, 'can a creature so young and so beautiful have already habitually to contemplate her bed of last long rest?'

'In troth, I kenna, my lord,' answered Moniplies; 'but there is the coffin, as they told me who have seen it. It is made of heben-wood, with silver nails, and lined all through with three-piled damask, might serve a princess to rest in.'

'Singular!' said Nigel, whose brain, like that of most active young spirits, was easily caught by the singular and the romantic; 'does she not eat with the family?'

'Who? she!' exclaimed Moniplies, as if surprised at the question; 'they would need a lang spoon would sup with her, I trow. Always there is something put for her into the tower, as they call it, whilk is a whigmaleery of a whirling-box, that turns round half on the tae side o' the wa', half on the tother.'

'I have seen the contrivance in foreign nunneries,' said the Lord of Glenvarloch. 'And is it thus she receives her food?'

'They tell me something is put in ilka day, for fashion's sake,' replied the attendant; 'but it's no to be supposed she would consume it, ony mair than the images of Bel and the Dragon consumed the dainty vivers that were placed before them. There are stout yeomen and chamber-queans in the house, enow to play the part of Lick-it-up-a', as well as the threescore and ten priests of Bel, besides their wives and children.'

‘And she is never seen in the family but when the hour of prayer arrives?’ said the master.

‘Never, that I hear of,’ replied the servant.

‘It is singular,’ said Nigel Olifaunt, musing. ‘Were it not for the ornaments which she wears, and still more for her attendance upon the service of the Protestant Church, I should know what to think, and should believe her either a Catholic votaress, who, for some cogent reason, was allowed to make her cell here in London, or some unhappy Popish devotee, who was in the course of undergoing a dreadful penance. As it is, I know not what to deem of it.’

His reverie was interrupted by the linkboy knocking at the door of honest John Christie, whose wife came forth with ‘quips, and becks, and wreathed smiles,’ to welcome her honoured guest on his return to his apartment.

CHAPTER VIII

Ay ! mark the matron well — and laugh not, Harry,
At her old steeple hat and velvet guard —
I've call'd her like the ear of Dionysius ;
I mean that ear-form'd vault, built o'er his dungeon,
To catch the groans and discontented murmurs
Of his poor bondsmen. Even so doth Martha
Drink up, for her own purpose, all that passes,
Or is supposed to pass, in this wide city.
She can retail it too, if that her profit
Shall call on her to do so ; and retail it
For your advantage, so that you can make
Your profit jump with hers.

The Conspiracy.

WE must now introduce to the reader's acquaintance another character, busy and important far beyond her ostensible situation in society — in a word, Dame Ursula Suddlechop, wife of Benjamin Suddlechop, the most renowned barber in all Fleet Street. This dame had her own particular merits, the principal part of which was, if her own report could be trusted, an infinite desire to be of service to her fellow-creatures. Leaving to her thin, half-starved partner the boast of having the most dexterous snap with his fingers of any shaver in London, and the care of a shop where starved apprentices flayed the faces of those who were boobies enough to trust them, the dame drove a separate and more lucrative trade, which yet had so many odd turns and windings, that it seemed in many respects to contradict itself.

Its highest and most important duties were of a very secret and confidential nature, and Dame Ursula Suddlechop was never known to betray any transaction entrusted to her, unless she had either been indifferently paid for her service or that some one found it convenient to give her a double *douceur* to make her disgorge the secret ; and these contingencies happened in so few cases, that her character for trustiness remained as unimpeached as that for honesty and benevolence.

In fact, she was a most admirable matron, and could be useful to the impassioned and the frail in the rise, progress, and consequences of their passion. She could contrive an interview for lovers who could show proper reasons for meeting privately; she could relieve the frail fair one of the burden of a guilty passion, and perhaps establish the hopeful offspring of unlicensed love as the heir of some family whose love was lawful, but where an heir had not followed the union. More than this she could do, and had been concerned in deeper and dearer secrets. She had been a pupil of Mrs. Turner, and learned from her the secret of making the yellow starch, and it may be, two or three other secrets of more consequence, though perhaps none that went to the criminal extent of those whereof her mistress was accused. But all that was deep and dark in her real character was covered by the show of outward mirth and good-humour, the hearty laugh and buxom jest with which the dame knew well how to conciliate the elder part of her neighbours, and the many petty arts by which she could recommend herself to the younger, those especially of her own sex.

Dame Ursula was, in appearance, scarce past forty, and her full, but not overgrown, form, and still comely features, although her person was plumped out and her face somewhat coloured by good cheer, had a joyous expression of gaiety and good-humour, which set off the remains of beauty in the wane. Marriages, births, and christenings were seldom thought to be performed with sufficient ceremony, for a considerable distance round her abode, unless Dame Ursley, as they called her, was present. She could contrive all sorts of pastimes, games, and jests which might amuse the large companies which the hospitality of our ancestors assembled together on such occasions, so that her presence was literally considered as indispensable in the families of all citizens of ordinary rank on such joyous occasions. So much also was she supposed to know of life and its labyrinths, that she was the willing confidante of half the loving couples in the vicinity, most of whom used to communicate their secrets to, and receive their counsels from, Dame Ursley. The rich rewarded her services with rings, owches, or gold pieces, which she liked still better; and she very generously gave her assistance to the poor, on the same mixed principles as young practitioners in medicine assist them, partly from compassion, and partly to keep her hand in use.

Dame Ursley's reputation in the city was the greater that her practice had extended beyond Temple Bar, and that she had acquaintances, nay, patrons and patronesses, among the quality, whose rank, as their members were much fewer, and the prospect of approaching the courtly sphere much more difficult, bore a degree of consequence unknown to the present day, when the toe of the citizen presses so close on the courtier's heel. Dame Ursley maintained her intercourse with this superior rank of customers partly by driving a small trade in perfumes, essences, pomades, head-gears from France, dishes or ornaments from China, then already beginning to be fashionable ; not to mention drugs of various descriptions, chiefly for the use of the ladies, and partly by other services more or less connected with the esoteric branches of her profession heretofore alluded to.

Possessing such and so many various modes of thriving, Dame Ursley was nevertheless so poor, that she might probably have mended her own circumstances, as well as her husband's, if she had renounced them all, and set herself quietly down to the care of her own household, and to assist Benjamin in the concerns of his trade. But Ursula was luxurious and genial in her habits, and could no more have endured the stinted economy of Benjamin's board than she could have reconciled herself to the bald chat of his conversation.

It was on the evening of the day on which Lord Nigel Olifaunt dined with the wealthy goldsmith that we must introduce Ursula Suddlechop upon the stage. She had that morning made a long tour to Westminster, was fatigued, and had assumed a certain large elbow-chair, rendered smooth by frequent use, placed on one side of her chimney, in which there was lit a small but bright fire. Here she observed, betwixt sleeping and waking, the simmering of a pot of well-spiced ale, on the brown surface of which bobbed a small crab-apple, sufficiently roasted, while a little mulatto girl watched, still more attentively, the process of dressing a veal sweetbread, in a silver stew-pan which occupied the other side of the chimney. With these viands, doubtless, Dame Ursula proposed concluding the well-spent day, of which she reckoned the labour over, and the rest at her own command. She was deceived, however ; for just as the ale, or, to speak technically, the lamb's-wool, was fitted for drinking, and the little dingy maiden intimated that the sweetbread was ready to be eaten, the thin cracked voice of Benjamin was heard from the bottom of the stairs.

'Why, Dame Ursley — why, wife, I say — why, dame — why, love, you are wanted more than a strop for a blunt razor — why, dame ——'

'I would some one would draw the razor across thy windpipe, thou bawling ass !' said the dame to herself, in the first moment of irritation against her clamorous helpmate ; and then called aloud — 'Why, what is the matter, Master Suddlechop ? I am just going to slip into bed ; I have been daggled to and fro the whole day.'

'Nay, sweetheart, it is not me,' said the patient Benjamin, 'but the Scots laundry-maid from neighbour Ramsay's, who must speak with you incontinent.'

At the word 'sweetheart,' Dame Ursley cast a wistful look at the mess which was stewed to a second in the stew-pan, and then replied with a sigh, 'Bid Scots Jenny come up, Master Suddlechop. I shall be very happy to hear what she has to say' ; then added in a lower tone, 'And I hope she will go to the devil in the flame of a tar-barrel, like many a Scots witch before her !'

The Scots laundress entered accordingly, and having heard nothing of the last kind wish of Dame Suddlechop, made her reverence with considerable respect, and said, her young mistress had returned home unwell, and wished to see her neighbour, Dame Ursley, directly.

'And why will it not do to-morrow, Jenny, my good woman ?' said Dame Ursley ; 'for I have been as far as Whitehall to-day already, and I am wellnigh worn off my feet, my good woman.'

'Aweel !' answered Jenny, with great composure, 'and if that sae be sae, I maun take the langer tramp mysell, and maun gae down the water-side for auld Mother Redcap, at the Hungerford Stairs, that deals in comforting young creatures, e'en as you do yoursell, hinny ; for ane o' ye the bairn maun see before she sleeps, and that's a' that I ken on't.'

So saying, the old emissary, without farther entreaty, turned on her heel, and was about to retreat, when Dame Ursley exclaimed — 'No — no ; if the sweet child, your mistress, has any necessary occasion for good advice and kind tendance, you need not go to Mother Redcap, Janet. She may do very well for skippers' wives, chandlers' daughters, and such-like ; but nobody shall wait on pretty Mistress Margaret, the daughter of his most sacred Majesty's horologer, excepting and saving myself. And so I will but take my chopins and my cloak, and put on my muffler, and cross the street to neighbour Ramsay's in an instant. But tell me yourself, good Jenny, are you not something tired

of your young lady's frolics and change of mind twenty times a-day ?'

'In troth, not I,' said the patient drudge, 'unless it may be when she is a wee fashious about washing her laces ; but I have been her keeper since she was a bairn, neighbour Suddlechop, and that makes a difference.'

'Ay,' said Dame Ursley, still busied putting on additional defences against the night air ; 'and you know for certain that she has two hundred pounds a-year in good land, at her own free disposal ?'

'Left by her grandmother, Heaven rest her soul !' said the Scotswoman ; 'and to a daintier lassie she could not have bequeathed it.'

'Very true—very true, mistress ; for, with all her little whims, I have always said Mistress Margaret Ramsay was the prettiest girl in the ward ; and, Jenny, I warrant the poor child has had no supper ?'

Jenny could not say but it was the case, 'For, her master being out, the twa 'prentice lads had gone out after shutting shop to fetch them home, and she and the other maid had gone out to Sandy MacGivan's, to see a friend frae Scotland.'

'As was very natural, Mrs. Janet,' said Dame Ursley, who found her interest in assenting to all sorts of propositions from all sorts of persons.

'And so the fire went out, too,' said Jenny.

'Which was the most natural of the whole,' said Dame Suddlechop ; 'and so, to cut the matter short, Jenny, I'll carry over the little bit of supper that I was going to eat. For dinner I have tasted none, and it may be my young pretty Mistress Marget will eat a morsel with me ; for it is mere emptiness, Mistress Jenny, that often puts these fancies of illness into young folks' heads.' So saying, she put the silver posset-cup with the ale into Jenny's hands, and assuming her mantle with the alacrity of one determined to sacrifice inclination to duty, she hid the stew-pan under its folds, and commanded Wilsa, the little mulatto girl, to light them across the street.

'Whither away so late ?' said the barber, whom they passed seated with his starveling boys round a mess of stock-fish and parsnips in the shop below.

'If I were to tell you, gaffer,' said the dame, with most contemptuous coolness, 'I do not think you could do my errand, so I will e'en keep it to myself.' Benjamin was too much accustomed to his wife's independent mode of conduct

to pursue his inquiry farther; nor did the dame tarry for farther question, but marched out at the door, telling the eldest of the boys 'to sit up till her return, and look to the house the whilst.'

The night was dark and rainy, and although the distance betwixt the two shops was short, it allowed Dame Ursley leisure enough, while she strode along with high-tucked petticoats, to embitter it by the following grumbling reflections — 'I wonder what I have done, that I must needs trudge at every old beldam's bidding and every young minx's maggot? I have been marched from Temple Bar to Whitechapel, on the matter of a pinmaker's wife having pricked her fingers — marry, her husband that made the weapon might have salved the wound. And here is this fantastic ape, pretty Mistress Margaret, forsooth — such a beauty as I could make of a Dutch doll, and as fantastic, and humorous, and conceited as if she were a duchess. I have seen her in the same day as changeful as a marmozet, and as stubborn as a mule. I should like to know whether her little conceited noddle or her father's old crazy calculating jolter-pate breeds most whimsies. But then there's that two hundred pounds a-year in dirty land, and the father is held a close chuff, though a fanciful; he is our landlord besides, and she has begged a late day from him for our rent; so, God help me, I must be conformable; besides, the little capricious devil is my only key to get at Master George Heriot's secret, and it concerns my character to find that out; and so, "*andiamos*," as the *lingua franca* hath it.'

Thus pondering, she moved forward with hasty strides until she arrived at the watchmaker's habitation. The attendant admitted them by means of a pass-key. Onward glided Dame Ursula, now in glimmer and now in gloom, not like the lovely Lady Christabel through Gothic sculpture and ancient armour, but creeping and stumbling amongst relics of old machines, and models of new inventions in various branches of mechanics, with which wrecks of useless ingenuity, either in a broken or half-finished shape, the apartment of the fanciful though ingenious mechanist was continually lumbered.

At length they attained, by a very narrow staircase, pretty Mistress Margaret's apartment, where she, the cynosure of the eyes of every bold young bachelor in Fleet Street, sat in a posture which hovered between the discontented and the disconsolate. For her pretty back and shoulders were rounded into a curve, her round and dimpled chin reposed in the hollow

of her little palm, while the fingers were folded over her mouth ; her elbow rested on a table, and her eyes seemed fixed upon the dying charcoal, which was expiring in a small grate. She scarce turned her head when Dame Ursula entered, and when the presence of that estimable matron was more precisely announced in words by the old Scotswoman, Mistress Margaret, without changing her posture, muttered some sort of answer that was wholly unintelligible.

‘Go your ways down to the kitchen with Wilsa, good Mistress Jenny,’ said Dame Ursula, who was used to all sorts of freaks on the part of her patients or clients, whichever they might be termed — ‘put the stew-pan and the porringer by the fireside, and go down below ; I must speak to my pretty love, Mistress Margaret, by myself ; and there is not a bachelor betwixt this and Bow but will envy me the privilege.’

The attendants retired as directed, and Dame Ursula, having availed herself of the embers of charcoal to place her stew-pan to the best advantage, drew herself as close as she could to her patient, and began in a low, soothing, and confidential tone of voice to inquire what ailed her pretty flower of neighbours.

‘Nothing, dame,’ said Margaret, somewhat pettishly, and changing her posture so as rather to turn her back upon the kind inquirer.

‘Nothing, lady-bird !’ answered Dame Suddlechop ; ‘and do you use to send for your friends out of bed at this hour for nothing ?’

‘It was not I who sent for you, dame,’ replied the malcontent maiden.

‘And who was it, then ?’ said Ursula ; ‘for if I had not been sent for, I had not been here at this time of night, I promise you !’

‘It was the old Scotch fool, Jenny, who did it out of her own head, I suppose,’ said Margaret ; ‘for she has been stunning me these two hours about you and Mother Redcap.’

‘Me and Mother Redcap !’ said Dame Ursula, ‘an old fool indeed, that couples folk up so. But come — come, my sweet little neighbour, Jenny is no such fool after all : she knows young folks want more and better advice than her own, and she knows, too, where to find it for them ; so you must take heart of grace, my pretty maiden, and tell me what you are moping about, and then let Dame Ursula alone for finding out a cure.’

‘Nay, an ye be so wise, Mother Ursula,’ replied the girl, ‘you may guess what I ail without my telling you.’

THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL

"Ay — ay, child," answered the complaisant matron, "no one can play better than I at the good old game of What is my thought like? Now I'll warrant that little head of yours is running on a new head-tire, a foot higher than those our city dames wear; or you are all for a trip to Islington or Ware, and your father is cross and will not consent; or —"

"Or you are an old fool, Dame Suddlechop," said Margaret, peevishly, "and must needs trouble yourself about matters you know nothing of."

"Fool as much as you will, mistress," said Dame Ursula, offended in her turn, "but not so very many years older than yourself, mistress."

"Oh! we are angry, are we?" said the beauty. "And pray, Madam Ursula, how come you, that are not so many years older than me, to talk about such nonsense to me, who am so many years younger, and who yet have too much sense to care about head-gears and Islington?"

"Well — well, young mistress," said the sage counsellor, rising, "I perceive I can be of no use here; and methinks, since you know your own matters so much better than other people do, you might dispense with disturbing folks at midnight to ask their advice."

"Why, now you are angry, mother," said Margaret, detaining her; "this comes of your coming out at eventide without eating your supper: I never heard you utter a cross word after you had finished your little morsel. Here, Janet, a trencher and salt for Dame Ursula. And what have you in that porringer, dame? Filthy clammy ale, as I would live. Let Janet fling it out of the window, or keep it for my father's morning-draught; and she shall bring you the pottle of sack that was set ready for him; good man, he will never find out the difference, for ale will wash down his dusty calculations quite as well as wine."

"Truly, sweetheart, I am of your opinion," said Dame Ursula, whose temporary displeasure vanished at once before these preparations for good cheer; and so, settling herself on the great easy-chair, with a three-legged table before her, she began to despatch, with good appetite, the little delicate dish which she had prepared for herself. She did not, however, fail in the duties of civility, and earnestly, but in vain, pressed Mistress Margaret to partake her dainties. The damsel declined the invitation.

"At least pledge me in a glass of sack," said Dame Ursula,

'I have heard my grandame say that, before the Gospellers came in, the old Catholic father confessors and their penitents always had a cup of sack together before confession; and you are my penitent.'

'I shall drink no sack, I am sure,' said Margaret; 'and I told you before that, if you cannot find out what ails me, I shall never have the heart to tell it.'

So saying, she turned away from Dame Ursula once more, and resumed her musing posture, with her hand on her elbow, and her back, at least one shoulder, turned towards her confidante.

'Nay, then,' said Dame Ursula, 'I must exert my skill in good earnest. You must give me this pretty hand, and I will tell you by palmistry, as well as any gipsy of them all, what foot it is you halt upon.'

'As if I halted upon any foot at all,' said Margaret, something scornfully, but yielding her left hand to Ursula, and continuing at the same time her averted position.

'I see brave lines here,' said Ursula, 'and not ill to read neither — pleasure and wealth, and merry nights and late mornings, to my beauty, and such an equipage as shall shake Whitehall. Oh, have I touched you there? and smile you now, my pretty one? for why should not he be Lord Mayor, and go to court in his gilded caroce, as others have done before him?'

'Lord Mayor! pshaw!' replied Margaret.

'And why pshaw at my Lord Mayor, sweetheart? or perhaps you pshaw at my prophecy? but there is a cross in every one's line of life as well as in yours, darling. And what though I see a 'prentice's flat cap in this pretty palm, yet there is a sparkling black eye under it, hath not its match in the ward of Farringdon Without.'

'Whom do you mean, dame?' said Margaret, coldly.

'Whom should I mean,' said Dame Ursula, 'but the prince of 'prentices and king of good company, Jenkin Vincent?'

'Out, woman — Jenkin Vincent! A clown — a Cockney!' exclaimed the indignant damsel.

'Ay, sets the wind in that quarter, beauty?' quoth the dame. 'Why, it has changed something since we spoke together last, for then I would have sworn it blew fairer for poor Jin Vin; and the poor lad dotes on you too, and would rather see your eyes than the first glimpse of the sun on the great holiday on May-day.'

'I would my eyes had the power of the sun to blind his, then,' said Margaret, 'to teach the drudge his place.'

'Nay,' said Dame Ursula, 'there be some who say that Frank Tunstall is as proper a lad as Jin Vin, and of surety he is third cousin to a knighthood, and come of a good house; and, so mayhap you may be for northward ho!'

'Maybe I may,' answered Margaret, 'but not with my father's 'prentice, I thank you, Dame Ursula.'

'Nay, then, the devil may guess your thoughts for me,' said Dame Ursula; 'this comes of trying to shoe a filly that is eternally wincing and shifting ground!'

'Hear me then,' said Margaret, 'and mind what I say. This day I dined abroad——'

'I can tell you where,' answered her counsellor—'with your godfather, the rich goldsmith; ay, you see I know something; nay, I could tell you, an I would, with whom, too.'

'Indeed!' said Margaret, turning suddenly round with an accent of strong surprise, and colouring up to the eyes.

'With old Sir Mungo Malagrowther,' said the oracular dame; 'he was trimmed in my Benjamin's shop in his way to the city.'

'Pshaw! the frightful old mouldy skeleton!' said the damsel.

'Indeed you say true, my dear,' replied the confidante; 'it is a shame to him to be out of St. Pancra's charnel-house, for I know no other place he is fit for, the foul-mouthed old railer. He said to my husband——'

'Somewhat which signifies nothing to our purpose, I dare-say,' interrupted Margaret. 'I *must* speak, then. There dined with us a nobleman——'

'A nobleman! the maiden's mad!' said Dame Ursula.

'There dined with us, I say,' continued Margaret, without regarding the interruption, 'a nobleman—a Scottish nobleman.'

'Now, Our Lady keep her!' said the confidante, 'she is quite frantic! Heard ever any one of a watchmaker's daughter falling in love with a nobleman; and a Scots nobleman, to make the matter complete, who are all as proud as Lucifer and as poor as Job? A Scots nobleman, quotha! I had as lief you told me of a Jew pedlar. I would have you think how all this is to end, pretty one, before you jump in the dark.'

'That is nothing to you, Ursula: it is your assistance,' said Mistress Margaret, 'and not your advice, that I am desirous to have, and you know I can make it worth your while.'

'Oh, it is not for the sake of lucre, Mistress Margaret,' answered the obliging dame; 'but truly I would have you listen to some advice; bethink you of your own condition.'

'My father's calling is mechanical,' said Margaret, 'but our

blood is not so. I have heard my father say that we are descended, at a distance indeed, from the great Earls of Dalwalsey.¹

'Ay — ay,' said Dame Ursula, 'even so. I never knew a Scot of you but was descended, as ye call it, from some great house or other, and a piteous descent it often is; and as for the distance you speak of, it is so great as to put you out of sight of each other. Yet do not toss your pretty head so scornfully, but tell me the name of this lordly northern gallant, and we will try what can be done in the matter.'

'It is Lord Glenvarloch, whom they call Lord Nigel Olifaunt,' said Margaret in a low voice, and turning away to hide her blushes.

'Marry, Heaven forefend!' exclaimed Dame Suddlechop; 'this is the very devil and something worse!'

'How mean you?' said the damsel, surprised at the vivacity of her exclamation.

'Why, know ye not,' said the dame, 'what powerful enemies he has at court? know ye not — But blisters on my tongue, it runs too fast for my wit; enough to say, that you had better make your bridal-bed under a falling house than think of young Glenvarloch.'

'He is unfortunate, then?' said Margaret. 'I knew it — I divined it: there was sorrow in his voice when he said even what was gay; there was a touch of misfortune in his melancholy smile; he had not thus clung to my thoughts had I seen him in all the mid-day glare of prosperity.'

'Romances have cracked her brain!' said Dame Ursula; 'she is a castaway girl — utterly distraught — loves a Scots lord, and likes him the better for being unfortunate! Well, mistress, I am sorry this is a matter I cannot aid you in: it goes against my conscience, and it is an affair above my condition, and beyond my management; but I will keep your counsel.'

'You will not be so base as to desert me, after having drawn my secret from me?' said Margaret, indignantly; 'if you do, I know how to have my revenge; and if you do not, I will reward you well. Remember the house your husband dwells in is my father's property.'

'I remember it but too well, Mistress Margaret,' said Ursula, after a moment's reflection, 'and I would serve you in anything in my condition; but to meddle with such high matters — I shall never forget poor Mistress Turner,² my honoured patroness,

¹ See Note 13.
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² See Note 14.

peace be with her ! She had the ill-luck to meddle in the matter of Somerset and Overbury, and so the great earl and his lady slipt their necks out of the collar, and left her and some half dozen others to suffer in their stead. I shall never forget the sight of her standing on the scaffold with the ruff round her pretty neck, all done up with the yellow starch which I had so often helped her to make, and that was so soon to give place to a rough hempen cord. Such a sight, sweetheart, will make one loth to meddle with matters that are too hot or heavy for their handling.'

'Out, you fool !' answered Mistress Margaret ; 'am I one to speak to you about such criminal practices as that wretch died for ? All I desire of you is, to get me precise knowledge of what affair brings this young nobleman to court.'

'And when you have his secret,' said Ursula, 'what will it avail you, sweetheart ? And yet I would do your errand, if you could do as much for me.'

'And what is it you would have of me ?' said Mistress Margaret.

'What you have been angry with me for asking before,' answered Dame Ursula. 'I want to have some light about the story of your godfather's ghost, that is only seen at prayers.'

'Not for the world,' said Mistress Margaret, 'will I be a spy on my kind godfather's secrets. No, Ursula, that I will never pry into which he desires to keep hidden. But thou knowest that I have a fortune of my own, which must at no distant day come under my own management ; think of some other recompense.'

'Ay, that I well know,' said the counsellor ; 'it is that two hundred per year, with your father's indulgence, that makes you so wilful, sweetheart.'

'It may be so,' said Margaret Ramsay ; 'meanwhile, do you serve me truly, and here is a ring of value in pledge that, when my fortune is in my own hand, I will redeem the token with fifty broad pieces of gold.'

'Fifty broad pieces of gold !' repeated the dame ; 'and this ring, which is a right fair one, in token you fail not of your word ! Well, sweetheart, if I must put my throat in peril, I am sure I cannot risk it for a friend more generous than you ; and I would not think of more than the pleasure of serving you, only Benjamin gets more idle every day, and our family——'

'Say no more of it,' said Margaret ; 'we understand each other. And now, tell me what you know of this young

man's affairs, which made you so unwilling to meddle with them ?'

'Of that I can say no great matter as yet,' answered Dame Ursula; 'only I know, the most powerful among his own countrymen are against him, and also the most powerful at the court here. But I will learn more of it; for it will be a dim print that I will not read for your sake, pretty Mistress Margaret. Know you where this gallant dwells?'

'I heard by accident,' said Margaret, as if ashamed of the minute particularity of her memory upon such an occasion, 'he lodges, I think — at one Christie's — if I mistake not — at Paul's Wharf — a ship-chandler's.'

'A proper lodging for a young baron! Well, but cheer you up, Mistress Margaret. If he has come up a caterpillar, like some of his countrymen, he may cast his slough like them, and come out a butterfly. So I drink good-night and sweet dreams to you in another parting cup of sack; and you shall hear tidings of me within four-and-twenty hours. And, once more, I commend you to your pillow, my pearl of pearls, and Marguerite of Marguerites!'

So saying, she kissed the reluctant cheek of her young friend, or patroness, and took her departure with the light and stealthy pace of one accustomed to accommodate her footsteps to the purposes of despatch and secrecy.

Margaret Ramsay looked after her for some time in anxious silence. 'I did ill,' she at length murmured; 'to let her wring this out of me; but she is artful, bold, and serviceable — and I think faithful — or, if not, she will be true at least to her interest, and that I can command. I would I had not spoken, however — I have begun a hopeless work. For what has he said to me to warrant my meddling in his fortunes? Nothing but words of the most ordinary import — mere table-talk and terms of course. Yet who knows.——' she said, and then broke off, looking at the glass the while; which, as it reflected back a face of great beauty, probably suggested to her mind a more favourable conclusion of the sentence than she cared to trust her tongue withal.

after announcing their names—the guards paying to Lord Glenvarloch the respect and honours due to his rank.

The young man's heart beat high and thick within him as he came into the royal apartments. His education abroad, conducted, as it had been, on a narrow and limited scale, had given him but imperfect ideas of the grandeur of a court; and the philosophical reflections which taught him to set ceremonial and exterior splendour at defiance proved, like other maxims of mere philosophy, ineffectual, at the moment they were weighed against the impression naturally made on the mind of an inexperienced youth by the unusual magnificence of the scene. The splendid apartments through which they passed, the rich apparel of the grooms, guards, and domestics in waiting, and the ceremonial attending their passage through the long suite of apartments, had something in it, trifling and commonplace as it might appear to practised courtiers, embarrassing, and even alarming, to one who went through these forms for the first time, and who was doubtful what sort of reception was to accompany his first appearance before his sovereign.

Heriot, in anxious attention to save his young friend from any momentary awkwardness, had taken care to give the necessary password to the warders, grooms of the chambers, ushers, or by whatever name they were designated; so they passed on without interruption.

In this manner they passed several ante-rooms, filled chiefly with guards, attendants of the court, and their acquaintances, male and female, who, dressed in their best apparel, and with eyes rounded by eager curiosity to make the most of their opportunity, stood, with beseeeming modesty, ranked against the wall, in a manner which indicated that they were spectators, not performers, in the courtly exhibition.

Through these exterior apartments Lord Glenvarloch and his city friend advanced into a large and splendid withdrawing-room, communicating with the presence-chamber, into which ante-room were admitted those only who, from birth, their posts in the state or household, or by the particular grant of the King, had right to attend the court, as men entitled to pay their respects to their sovereign.

Amid this favoured and selected company, Nigel observed Sir Mungo Malagrowth, who, avoided and discountenanced by those who knew how low he stood in court interest and favour, was but too happy in the opportunity of hooking himself upon a person of Lord Glenvarloch's rank, who was

as yet so inexperienced as to feel it difficult to shake off an intruder.

The knight forthwith framed his grim features to a ghastly smile, and, after a preliminary and patronising nod to George Heriot, accompanied with an aristocratic wave of the hand, which intimated at once superiority and protection, he laid aside altogether the honest citizen, to whom he owed many a dinner, to attach himself exclusively to the young lord, although he suspected he might be occasionally in the predicament of needing one as much as himself. And even the notice of this original, singular and unamiable as he was, was not entirely indifferent to the Lord Glenvarloch, since the absolute and somewhat constrained silence of his good friend Heriot, which left him at liberty to retire painfully to his own agitating reflections, was now relieved; while, on the other hand, he could not help feeling interest in the sharp and sarcastic information poured upon him by an observant, though discontented, courtier, to whom a patient auditor, and he a man of title and rank, was as much a prize as his acute and communicative disposition rendered him an entertaining companion to Nigel Olifaunt. Heriot, in the meantime, neglected by Sir Mungo, and avoiding every attempt by which the grateful politeness of Lord Glenvarloch strove to bring him into the conversation, stood by, with a kind of half smile on his countenance; but whether excited by Sir Mungo's wit or arising at his expense, did not exactly appear.

In the meantime, the trio occupied a nook of the ante-room next to the door of the presence-chamber, which was not yet thrown open, when Maxwell, with his rod of office, came bustling into the apartment, where most men, excepting those of high rank, made way for him. He stopped beside the party in which we are interested, looked for a moment at the young Scots nobleman, then made a slight obeisance to Heriot, and lastly, addressing Sir Mungo Malagrowth, began a hurried complaint to him of the misbehaviour of the gentlemen-pensioners and warders, who suffered all sort of citizens, suitors, and scriveners to sneak into the outer apartments, without either respect or decency. 'The English,' he said, 'were scandalised, for such a thing durst not be attempted in the Queen's days. In her time, there was then the courtyard for the mobility, and the apartments for the nobility; and it reflects on your place, Sir Mungo,' he added, 'belonging to the household as you do, that such things should not be better ordered.'

Here Sir Mungo, afflicted, as was frequently the case on such occasions, with one of his usual fits of deafness, answered, 'It was no wonder the mobility used freedoms, when those whom they saw in office were so little better in blood and havings than themselves.'

'You are right, sir — quite right,' said Maxwell, putting his hand on the tarnished embroidery on the old knight's sleeve: 'when such fellows see men in office dressed in cast-off suits, like paltry stage-players, it is no wonder the court is thronged with intruders.'

'Were you lauding the taste of my embroidery, Maister Maxwell?' answered the knight, who apparently interpreted the deputy-chamberlain's meaning rather from his action than his words. 'It is of an ancient and liberal pattern, having been made by your mother's father, auld James Stitchell, a master-fashioner of honest repute, in Merlin's Wynd, whom I made a point to employ, as I am now happy to remember, seeing your father thought fit to intermarry with sic a person's daughter.'¹

Maxwell looked stern; but, conscious there was nothing to be got of Sir Mungo in the way of amends, and that prosecuting the quarrel with such an adversary would only render him ridiculous, and make public a misalliance of which he had no reason to be proud, he covered his resentment with a sneer; and expressing his regret that Sir Mungo was become too deaf to understand or attend to what was said to him, walked on, and planted himself beside the folding-doors of the presence-chamber, at which he was to perform the duty of deputy-chamberlain, or usher, so soon as they should be opened.

'The door of the presence is about to open,' said the goldsmith, in a whisper, to his young friend; 'my condition permits me to go no farther with you. Fail not to present yourself boldly, according to your birth, and offer your supplication; which the King will not refuse to accept, and, as I hope, to consider favourably.'

As he spoke, the door of the presence-chamber opened accordingly, and, as is usual on such occasions, the courtiers began to advance towards it, and to enter in a slow, but continuous and uninterrupted, stream.

As Nigel presented himself in his turn at the entrance, and mentioned his name and title, Maxwell seemed to hesitate. 'You are not known to any one,' he said. 'It is my duty to

¹ See Note 12, p. 452.

suffer no one to pass to the presence, my lord, whose face is unknown to me, unless upon the word of a responsible person.'

'I came with Master George Heriot,' said Nigel, in some embarrassment at this unexpected interruption.

'Master Heriot's name will pass current for much gold and silver, my lord,' replied Maxwell, with a civil sneer, 'but not for birth and rank. I am compelled by my office to be peremptory. The entrance is impeded; I am much concerned to say it — your lordship must stand back.'

'What is the matter?' said an old Scottish nobleman, who had been speaking with George Heriot, after he had separated from Nigel, and who now came forward, observing the altercation betwixt the latter and Maxwell.

'It is only Master Deputy-Chamberlain Maxwell,' said Sir Mungo Malagrowth, 'expressing his joy to see Lord Glenvarloch at court, whose father gave him his office; at least I think he is speaking to that purport, for your lordship kens my imperfection.' A subdued laugh, such as the situation permitted, passed round amongst those who heard this specimen of Sir Mungo's sarcastic temper. But the old nobleman stepped still more forward, saying, 'What! the son of my gallant old opponent, Ochtred Olifaunt? I will introduce him to the presence myself.'

So saying, he took Nigel by the arm, without farther ceremony, and was about to lead him forward, when Maxwell, still keeping his rod across the door, said, but with hesitation and embarrassment, 'My lord, this gentleman is not known, and I have orders to be scrupulous.'

'Tutti-taiti, man,' said the old lord, 'I will be answerable he is his father's son, from the cut of his eyebrow; and thou, Maxwell, knewest his father well enough to have spared thy scruples. Let us pass, man.' So saying, he put aside the deputy-chamberlain's rod and entered the presence-room, still holding the young nobleman by the arm.

'Why, I must know you, man,' he said — 'I must know you. I knew your father well, man, and I have broke a lance and crossed a blade with him; and it is to my credit that I am living to brag of it. He was king's-man, and I was queen's-man, during the Douglas wars — young fellows both, that feared neither fire nor steel; and we had some old feudal quarrels besides, that had come down from father to son, with our seal-rings, two-handed broadswords, and plate-coats, and the crests on our burgenets.'

'Too loud, my Lord of Huntinglen,' whispered a gentleman of the chamber. 'The King! — the King!'

The old earl (for such he proved) took the hint and was silent; and James, advancing from a side-door, received in succession the compliments of strangers, while a little group of favourite courtiers, or officers of the household, stood around him, to whom he addressed himself from time to time. Some more pains had been bestowed on his toilet than upon the occasion when we first presented the monarch to our readers; but there was a natural awkwardness about his figure which prevented his clothes from sitting handsomely, and the prudence or timidity of his disposition had made him adopt the custom already noticed, of wearing a dress so thickly quilted as might withstand the stroke of a dagger, which added an ungainly stiffness to his whole appearance, contrasting oddly with the frivolous, ungraceful, and fidgeting motions with which he accompanied his conversation. And yet, though the King's deportment was very undignified, he had a manner so kind, familiar, and good-humoured, was so little apt to veil over or conceal his own foibles, and had so much indulgence and sympathy for those of others, that his address, joined to his learning and a certain proportion of shrewd mother-wit, failed not to make a favourable impression on those who approached his person.

When the Earl of Huntinglen had presented Nigel to his sovereign, a ceremony which the good peer took upon himself, the King received the young lord very graciously, and observed to his introducer that he 'was fain to see them twa stand side by side; for I trow, my Lord Huntinglen,' continued he, 'your ancestors, ay, and e'en your lordship's self and this lad's father, have stood front to front at the sword's point, and that is a worse posture.'

'Until your Majesty,' said Lord Huntinglen, 'made Lord Ochtrede and me cross palms, upon the memorable day when your Majesty feasted all the nobles that were at feud together, and made them join hands in your presence —'

'I mind it weel,' said the King — 'I mind it weel; it was a blessed day, being the nineteen of September, of all days in the year; and it was a blithe sport to see how some of the carles girmed as they clapped loofs together. By my saul, I thought some of them, mair special the Hieland chieles, wad have broken out in our own presence; but we caused them to march hand in hand to the Cross, ourselves leading the way,

and there drink a blithe cup of kindness with ilk other, to the stanching of feud and perpetuation of amity. Auld John Anderson was provost that year; the carle grat for joy, and the bailies and councillors danced bareheaded in our presence like five-year-auld colts, for very triumph.'

'It was indeed a happy day,' said Lord Huntinglen, 'and will not be forgotten in the history of your Majesty's reign.'

'I would not that it were, my lord,' replied the monarch — 'I would not that it were pretermitted in our annals. Ay, ay — *Beati pacifici*. My English lieges here may weel make much of me, for I would have them to know, they have gotten the only peaceable man that ever came of my family. If James with the Fiery Face had come amongst you,' he said, looking round him, 'or my great grandsire, of Flodden membyr!'

'We should have sent him back to the North again,' whispered one English nobleman.

'At least,' said another, in the same inaudible tone, 'we should have had a *man* to our sovereign, though he were but a Scotsman.'

'And now, my young springald,' said the King to Lord Glenvarloch, 'where have you been spending your calf-time?'

'At Leyden, of late, may it please your Majesty,' answered Lord Nigel.

'Aha! a scholar,' said the King; 'and, by my saul, a modest and ingenuous youth, that hath not forgotten how to blush, like most of our travelled Monsieurs. We will treat him conformably.'

Then drawing himself up, coughing slightly, and looking around him with the conscious importance of superior learning, while all the courtiers who understood, or understood not, Latin, pressed eagerly forward to listen, the sapient monarch prosecuted his inquiries as follows:—

'Hem! — hem! Salve bis, quaterque salve, Glenvarlochides noster! Nuperumne ab Lugduno Batavorum Britanniam redisti?'

The young nobleman replied, bowing low, 'Imo, Rex augustissime, biennium fere apud Lugdunenses moratus sum.'

James proceeded — 'Biennium dicis? bene, bene, optime factum est. Non uno die, quod dicunt, — intelligisti, Domine Glenvarlochiensis? Aha!'

Nigel replied by a reverent bow, and the King, turning to those behind him, said — 'Adolescens quidem ingenui vultus ingenuique pudoris.' Then resumed his learned queries. 'Et

quid hodie Lugdunenses loquuntur? Vossius vester, nihilne novi scripsit? nihil certe, quod doleo, typis recenter edidit.'

'Valet quidem Vossius, Rex benevole,' replied Nigel, 'ast senex veneratissimus annum agit, ni fallor, septuagesimum.'

'Virum, mehercle, vix tam grandævum crediderim,' replied the monarch. 'Et Vorstius iste, Arminii improbi successor æque ac sectator — herosne adhuc, ut cum Homero loquar, Ζωὸς ἐστὶ καὶ ἐπὶ χθονὶ δέρκων?'

Nigel, by good fortune, remembered that Vorstius, the divine last mentioned in his Majesty's queries about the state of Dutch literature, had been engaged in a personal controversy with James, in which the King had taken so deep an interest, as at length to hint in his public correspondence with the United States, that they would do well to apply the secular arm to stop the progress of heresy by violent measures against the professor's person — a demand which their Mighty Mightinesses' principles of universal toleration induced them to elude, though with some difficulty. Knowing all this, Lord Glenvarloch, though a courtier of only five minutes' standing, had address enough to reply —

'Vivum quidem, haud diu est, hominem videbam; vigere autem quis dicat qui sub fulminibus eloquentiæ, tuæ, Rex magne, jamdudum pronus jacet, et prostratus?'

This last tribute to his polemical powers completed James's happiness, which the triumph of exhibiting his erudition had already raised to a considerable height.

He rubbed his hands, snapped his fingers, fidgeted, chuckled, exclaimed — '*Euge! belle! optime!*' and turning to the Bishops of Exeter and Oxford, who stood behind him, he said, 'Ye see, my lords, no bad specimen of our Scottish Latinity, with which language we would all our subjects of England were as well imbued as this and other youths of honourable birth in our auld kingdom; also, we keep the genuine and Roman pronunciation like other learned nations on the Continent, sæe that we hold communing with any scholar in the universe who can but speak the Latin tongue; whereas ye, our learned subjects of England, have introduced into your universities otherwise most learned, a fashion of pronouncing like unto the "nippit foot and clippit foot" of the bride in the fairy tale, whilk manner of speech — take it not amiss that I be round

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The Bishop of Exeter bowed, as in acquiescence to the royal censure; but he of Oxford stood upright, as mindful over what subjects his see extended, and as being equally willing to become food for fagots in defence of the Latinity of the university as for any article of his religious creed.

The King, without awaiting an answer from either prelate, proceeded to question Lord Nigel, but in the vernacular tongue — ‘Weel, my likely alumnus of the Muses, and what make you so far from the North?’

‘To pay my homage to your Majesty,’ said the young nobleman, kneeling on one knee, ‘and to lay before you,’ he added, ‘this my humble and dutiful supplication.’

The presenting of a pistol would certainly have startled King James more, but could, setting apart the fright, hardly have been more displeasing to his indolent disposition.

‘And is it even so, man?’ said he; ‘and can no single man, were it but for the rarity of the case, ever come up frae Scotland excepting *ex proposito* — on set purpose, to see what he can make out of his loving sovereign? It is but three days syne that we had weelnigh lost our life, and put three kingdoms into dule-weeds, from the over-haste of a clumsy-handed peasant to thrust a packet into our hand, and now we are beset by the like impediment in our very court. To our secretary with that gear, my lord — to our secretary with that gear.’

‘I have already offered my humble supplication to your Majesty’s Secretary of State,’ said Lord Glenvarloch; ‘but it seems —’

‘That he would not receive it, I warrant?’ said the King, interrupting him. ‘By my saul, our secretary kens that point of kingcraft called refusing better than we do, and will look at nothing but what he likes himsell: I think I wad make a better secretary to him than he to me. Weel, my lord, you are welcome to London; and, as ye seem an acute and learned youth, I advise ye to turn your neb northward as soon as ye like, and settle yoursell for a while at St. Andrews, and we will be right glad to hear that you prosper in your studies. *Incumbite remis fortiter.*’

While the King spoke, he held the petition of the young lord carelessly, like one who only delayed till the suppli-

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cant's back was turned to throw it away, or at least lay it aside to be no more looked at. The petitioner, who read this in his cold and indifferent looks, and in the manner in which he twisted and crumpled together the paper, arose with a bitter sense of anger and disappointment, made a profound obeisance, and was about to retire hastily. But Lord Huntinglen,¹ who stood by him, checked his intention by an almost imperceptible touch upon the skirt of his cloak, and Nigel, taking the hint, retreated only a few steps from the royal presence, and then made a pause. In the meantime, Lord Huntinglen kneeled before James, in his turn, and said, 'May it please your Majesty to remember, that upon one certain occasion you did promise to grant me a boon every year of your sacred life?'

'I mind it weel, man,' answered James — 'I mind it weel, and good reason why: it was when you unclasped the fause traitor Ruthven's fangs from about our royal throat, and drove your dirk into him like a true subject. We did then, as you remind us — whilk was unnecessary — being partly beside ourselves with joy at our liberation, promise we would grant you a free boon every year; whilk promise, on our coming to menseful possession of our royal faculties, we did confirm; *restrictive* always and *conditionaliter* that your lordship's demand should be such as we, in our royal discretion, should think reasonable.'

'Even so, gracious sovereign,' said the old earl, 'and may I yet farther crave to know if I have ever exceeded the bounds of your royal benevolence?'

'By my word, man, no!' said the King: 'I cannot remember you have asked much for yourself, if it be not a dog, or a hawk, or a buck out of our park at Theobald's, or such-like. But to what serves this preface?'

'To the boon which I am now to ask of your Grace,' said Lord Hungtinglen; 'which is, that your Majesty would be pleased, on the instant, to look at the placet of Lord Glenvarloch, and do upon it what your own just and royal nature shall think meet and just, without reference to your secretary or any other of your council.'

'By my saul, my lord, this is strange,' said the King: 'ye are pleading for the son of your enemy!'

'Of one who *was* my enemy till your Majesty made him my friend,' answered Lord Huntinglen.

¹ See Note 15.

'Weel spoken, my lord!' said the King, 'and with a true Christian spirit. And, respecting the supplication of this young man, I partly guess where the matter lies; and in plain troth I had promised to George Heriot to be good to the lad. But then here the shoe pinches. Steenie and Baby Charles cannot abide him, neither can your own son, my lord; and so, methinks, he had better go down to Scotland before he comes to ill-luck by them.'

'My son, an it please your Majesty, so far as he is concerned, shall not direct my doings,' said the earl, 'nor any wild-headed young man of them all.'

'Why, neither shall they mine,' replied the monarch; 'by my father's saul, none of them all shall play rex with me: I will do what I will, and what I aught, like a free king.'

'Your Majesty will then grant me my boon?' said the Lord Huntinglen.

'Ay, marry will I — marry will I,' said the King; 'but follow me this way, man, where we may be more private.'

He led Lord Huntinglen with rather a hurried step through the courtiers, all of whom gazed earnestly on this unwonted scene, as is the fashion of all courts on similar occasions. The King passed into a little cabinet, and bade, in the first moment, Lord Huntinglen lock or bar the door; but countermanded his direction in the next, saying, 'No, no, no — bread o' life, man, I am a free king — will do what I will and what I should — I am *justus et tenax propositi*, man; nevertheless, keep by the door, Lord Huntinglen, in case Steenie should come in with his mad humour.'

'Oh, my poor master!' groaned the Earl of Huntinglen. 'When you were in your own cold country, you had warmer blood in your veins.'

The King hastily looked over the petition or memorial, every now and then glancing his eye towards the door, and then sinking it hastily on the paper, ashamed that Lord Huntinglen, whom he respected, should suspect him of timidity.

'To grant the truth,' he said, after he had finished his hasty perusal, 'this is a hard case; and harder than it was represented to me, though I had some inkling of it before. And so the lad only wants payment of the siller due from us, in order to reclaim his paternal estate? But then, Huntinglen, the lad will have other debts, and why burden himsell with sae mony acres of barren woodland? Let the land gang, man — let the land gang. Steenie has the promise of it from our Scottish chancellor: it

is the best hunting-ground in Scotland ; and Baby Charles and Steenie want to kill a buck there this next year. 'They maun hae the land — they maun hae the land ; and our debt shall be paid to the young man plack and bawbee, and he may have the spending of it at our court ; or if he has such an eard hunger, wouns ! man, we'll stuff his stomach with English land, which is worth twice as much, ay, ten times as much, as these accursed hills and heughs, and mosses and muirs, that he is sae keen after.'

All this while the poor King ambled up and down the apartment in a piteous state of uncertainty, which was made more ridiculous by his shambling, circular mode of managing his legs, and his ungainly fashion on such occasions of fiddling with the bunches of ribbons which fastened the lower part of his dress.

Lord Huntinglen listened with great composure, and answered, 'An it please your Majesty, there was an answer yielded by Naboth when Ahab coveted his vineyard — "The Lord forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee."'

'Ey, my lord — ey, my lord !' ejaculated James, while all the colour mounted both to his cheek and nose ; 'I hope ye mean not to teach me divinity ? Ye need not fear, my lord, that I will shun to do justice to every man ; and, since your lordship will give me no help to take up this in a more peaceful manner — whilk, methinks, would be better for the young man, as I said before — why, since it maun be so, 'sdeath, I am a free king, man, and he shall have his money and redeem his land, and make a kirk and a miln of it, an he will.' So saying, he hastily wrote an order on the Scottish Exchequer for the sum in question, and then added, 'How they are to pay it, I see not ; but I warrant he will find money on the order among the goldsmiths, who can find it for every one but me. And now you see, my Lord of Huntinglen, that I am neither an untrue man, to deny you the boon whilk I became bound for ; nor an Ahab, to covet Naboth's vineyard ; nor a mere nose-of-wax, to be twisted this way and that by favourites and counsellors at their pleasure. I think you will grant now that I am none of those ?'

'You are my own native and noble prince,' said Huntinglen, as he knelt to kiss the royal hand — 'just and generous, whenever you listen to the workings of your own heart.'

'Ay — ay,' said the King, laughing good-naturedly, as he raised his faithful servant from the ground, 'that is what ye all say when I do anything to please ye. There — there, take the sign-manual, and away with you and this young fellow. I wonder Steenie and Baby Charles have not broken in on us before now.'

Lord Huntinglen hastened from the cabinet, foreseeing a scene at which he was unwilling to be present, but which sometimes occurred when James roused himself so far as to exert his own free will, of which he boasted so much, in spite of that of his imperious favourite Steenie, as he called the Duke of Buckingham, from a supposed resemblance betwixt his very handsome countenance and that with which the Italian artists represented the proto-martyr Stephen. In fact, the haughty favourite, who had the unusual good fortune to stand as high in the opinion of the heir-apparent as of the existing monarch, had considerably diminished in his respect towards the latter; and it was apparent to the more shrewd courtiers that James endured his domination rather from habit, timidity, and a dread of encountering his stormy passions, than from any heartfelt continuation of regard towards him, whose greatness had been the work of his own hands. To save himself the pain of seeing what was likely to take place on the duke's return, and to preserve the King from the additional humiliation which the presence of such a witness must have occasioned, the earl left the cabinet as speedily as possible, having first carefully pocketed the important sign-manual.

No sooner had he entered the presence-room than he hastily sought Lord Glenvarloch, who had withdrawn into the embrasure of one of the windows, from the general gaze of men who seemed disposed only to afford him the notice which arises from surprise and curiosity, and, taking him by the arm, without speaking, led him out of the presence-chamber into the first ante-room. Here they found the worthy goldsmith, who approached them with looks of curiosity, which were checked by the old lord, who said hastily, 'All is well. Is your barge in waiting?' Heriot answered in the affirmative. 'Then,' said Lord Huntinglen, 'you shall give me a cast in it, as the watermen say, and I, in requital, will give you both your dinner; for we must have some conversation together.'

They both followed the earl without speaking, and were in the second ante-room when the important annunciation of the ushers, and the hasty murmur with which all made ample way as the company repeated to each other, 'The duke—the duke!' made them aware of the approach of the omnipotent favourite.

He entered, that unhappy minion of court favour, sumptuously dressed in the picturesque attire which will live for ever on the canvas of Vandyke, and which marks so well the proud

age when aristocracy, though undermined and nodding to its fall, still, by external show and profuse expense, endeavoured to assert its paramount superiority over the inferior orders. The handsome and commanding countenance, stately form, and graceful action and manners of the Duke of Buckingham made him become that picturesque dress beyond any man of his time. At present, however, his countenance seemed discomposed, his dress a little more disordered than became the place, his step hasty, and his voice imperative.

All marked the angry spot upon his brow, and bore back so suddenly to make way for him that the Earl of Huntinglen, who affected no extraordinary haste on the occasion, with his companions, who could not, if they would, have decently left him, remained as it were by themselves in the middle of the room, and in the very path of the angry favourite. He touched his cap sternly as he looked on Huntinglen, but unbonneted to Heriot, and sunk his beaver, with its shadowy plume, as low as the floor, with a profound air of mock respect. In returning his greeting, which he did simply and unaffectedly, the citizen only said — 'Too much courtesy, my lord duke, is often the reverse of kindness.'

'I grieve you should think so, Master Heriot,' answered the duke; 'I only meant, by my homage, to claim your protection, sir — your patronage. You are become, I understand, a solicitor of suits — a promoter — an undertaker — a fantor of court suitors of merit and quality who chance to be penniless. I trust your bags will bear you out in your new boast.'

'They will bear me the farther, my lord duke,' answered the goldsmith, 'that my boast is but small.'

'Oh, you do yourself less than justice, my good Master Heriot,' continued the duke, in the same tone of irony: 'you have a marvellous court-faction, to be the son of an Edinburgh tinker. Have the goodness to prefer me to the knowledge of the high-born nobleman who is honoured and advantaged by your patronage.'

'That shall be *my* task,' said Lord Huntinglen, with emphasis. 'My lord duke, I desire you to know Nigel Olifaunt, Lord Glenvarloch, representative of one of the most ancient and powerful baronial houses in Scotland. Lord Glenvarloch, I present you to his Grace the Duke of Buckingham,¹ representative of Sir George Villiers, knight, of Brookesby, in the county of Leicester.'

¹ See Note 16.

The duke coloured still more high as he bowed to Lord Glenvarloch scornfully — a courtesy which the other returned haughtily and with restrained indignation. 'We know each other, then,' said the duke, after a moment's pause; and as if he had seen something in the young nobleman which merited more serious notice than the bitter raillery with which he had commenced — 'we know each other; and you know me, my lord, for your enemy.'

'I thank you for your plainness, my lord duke,' replied Nigel; 'an open enemy is better than a hollow friend.'

'For you, my Lord Huntinglen,' said the duke, 'methinks you have but now overstepped the limits of the indulgence permitted to you as the father of the Prince's friend and my own.'

'By my word, my lord duke,' replied the earl, 'it is easy for any one to outstep boundaries of the existence of which he is not aware. It is neither to secure my protection nor approbation that my son keeps such exalted company.'

'Oh, my lord, we know you, and indulge you,' said the duke; 'you are one of those who presume for a life-long upon the merit of one good action.'

'In faith, my lord, and if it be so,' said the old earl, 'I have at least the advantage of such as presume more than I do, without having done any action of merit whatever. But I mean not to quarrel with you, my lord; we can neither be friends nor enemies: you have your path and I have mine.'

Buckingham only replied by throwing on his bonnet, and shaking its lofty plume with a careless and scornful toss of the head. They parted thus; the duke walking onwards through the apartments, and the others leaving the palace and repairing to Whitehall Stairs, where they embarked on board the barge of the citizen.

CHAPTER X.

Bid not thy fortune troll upon the wheels
Of yonder dancing cubes of mottled bone ;
And drown it not, like Egypt's royal harlot,
Dissolving her rich pearl in the brimm'd wine-cup.
These are the arts, Lothario, which shrink acres
Into brief yards — bring sterling pounds to farthings,
Credit to infamy ; and the poor gull,
Who might have lived an honour'd, easy life,
To ruin, and an unregarded grave.

The Changes.

WHEN they were fairly embarked on the Thames, the earl took from his pocket the supplication, and, pointing out to George Heriot the royal warrant indorsed thereon, asked him if it were in due and regular form. The worthy citizen hastily read it over, thrust forth his hand as if to congratulate the Lord Glenvarloch, then checked himself, pulled out his barnacles (a present from old David Ramsay), and again perused the warrant with the most business-like and critical attention. 'It is strictly correct and formal,' he said, looking to the Earl of Huntinglen, 'and I sincerely rejoice at it.'

'I doubt nothing of its formality,' said the earl ; 'the King understands business well, and, if he does not practise it often, it is only because indolence obscures parts which are naturally well qualified for the discharge of affairs. But what is next to be done for our young friend, Master Heriot ? You know how I am circumstanced. Scottish lords, living at the English court, have seldom command of money ; yet, unless a sum can be presently raised on this warrant, matters standing as you hastily hinted to me, the mortgage, wadset, or whatever it is called, will be foreclosed.'

'It is true,' said Heriot, in some embarrassment, 'there is a large sum wanted in redemption ; yet, if it is not raised, there will be an expiry of the legal, as our lawyers call it, and the estate will be evicted.'

'My noble—my worthy friends, who have taken up my cause so undeservedly, so unexpectedly,' said Nigel, 'do not let me be a burden on your kindness. You have already done too much where nothing was merited.'

'Peace, man—peace,' said Lord Huntinglen, 'and let old Heriot and me puzzle this scent out. He is about to open—hark to him!'

'My lord,' said the citizen, 'the Duke of Buckingham sneers at our city money-bags; yet they can sometimes open to prop a falling and a noble house.'

'We know they can,' said Lord Huntinglen. 'Mind not Buckingham, he is a Peg-a-Ramsay; and now for the remedy.'

'I partly hinted to Lord Glenvarloch already,' said Heriot, 'that the redemption money might be advanced upon such a warrant as the present, and I will engage my honour that it can. But then, in order to secure the lender, he must come in the shoes of the creditor to whom he advances payment.'

'Come in his shoes!' replied the earl. 'Why, what have boots or shoes to do with this matter, my good friend?'

'It is a law phrase, my lord. My experience has made me pick up a few of them,' said Heriot.

'Ay, and of better things along with them, Master George,' replied Lord Huntinglen; 'but what means it?'

'Simply this,' resumed the citizen, 'that the lender of this money will transact with the holder of the mortgage, or wadset, over the estate of Glenvarloch, and obtain from him such a conveyance to his right as shall leave the lands pledged for the debt, in case the warrant upon the Scottish Exchequer should prove unproductive. I fear, in this uncertainty of public credit, that, without some such counter security, it will be very difficult to find so large a sum.'

'Ho la!' said the Earl of Huntinglen, 'halt there! a thought strikes me. What if the new creditor should admire the estate as a hunting-field as much as my Lord Grace of Buckingham seems to do, and should wish to kill a buck there in the summer season? It seems to me that, on your plan, Master George, our new friend will be as well entitled to block Lord Glenvarloch out of his inheritance as the present holder of the mortgage.'

The citizen laughed. 'I will engage,' he said, 'that the keenest sportsman to whom I may apply on this occasion shall not have a thought beyond the lord mayor's Easter hunt in Epping Forest. But your lordship's caution is reasonable. The creditor must be bound to allow Lord Glenvarloch sufficient

time to redeem his estate by means of the royal warrant, and must waive in his favour the right of instant foreclosure, which may be, I should think, the more easily managed, as the right of redemption must be exercised in his own name.'

'But where shall we find a person in London fit to draw the necessary writings?' said the earl. 'If my old friend Sir John Skene of Hallyards had lived, we should have had advice; but time presses, and ——'

'I know,' said Heriot, 'an orphan lad, a scrivener, that dwells by Temple Bar; he can draw deeds both after the English and Scottish fashion, and I have trusted him often in matters of weight and of importance. I will send one of my serving-men for him, and the mutual deeds may be executed in your lordship's presence; for, as things stand, there should be no delay.' His lordship readily assented; and, as they now landed upon the private stairs leading down to the river from the gardens of the handsome hotel which he inhabited, the messenger was despatched without loss of time.

Nigel, who had sat almost stupified while these zealous friends volunteered for him in arranging the measures by which his fortune was to be disembarrassed, now made another eager attempt to force upon them his broken expressions of thanks and gratitude. But he was again silenced by Lord Huntinglen, who declared he would not hear a word on that topic, and proposed instead, that they should take a turn in the pleached alley, or sit upon the stone bench which overlooked the Thames, until his son's arrival should give the signal for dinner.

'I desire to introduce Dalgarno and Lord Glenvarloch to each other,' he said, 'as two who will be near neighbours, and I trust will be more kind ones than their fathers were formerly. There is but three Scots miles betwixt the castles, and the turrets of the one are visible from the battlements of the other.'

The old earl was silent for a moment, and appeared to muse upon the recollections which the vicinity of the castles had summoned up.

'Does Lord Dalgarno follow the court to Newmarket next week?' said Heriot, by way of renewing the conversation.

'He proposes so, I think,' answered Lord Huntinglen, relapsed into his reverie for a minute or two, and then addressed Nigel somewhat abruptly—

'My young friend, when you attain possession of your inheritance, as I hope you soon will, I trust you will not add one to the idle followers of the court, but reside on your patrimonial

estate, cherish your ancient tenants, relieve and assist your poor kinsmen, protect the poor against subaltern oppression, and do what our fathers used to do, with fewer lights and with less means than we have.'

'And yet the advice to keep the country,' said Heriot, 'comes from an ancient and constant ornament of the court.'

'From an old courtier, indeed,' said the earl, 'and the first of my family that could so write himself: my grey beard falls on a cambric ruff and a silken doublet, my father's descended upon a buff coat and a breastplate. I would not that those days of battle returned; but I should love well to make the oaks of my old forest of Dalgarno ring once more with halloo, and horn, and hound, and to have the old stone-arched hall return the hearty shout of my vassals and tenants, as the bicker and the quaigh walked their rounds amongst them. I should like to see the broad Tay once more before I die; not even the Thames can match it, in my mind.'

'Surely, my lord,' said the citizen, 'all this might be easily done: it costs but a moment's resolution, and the journey of some brief days, and you will be where you desire to be; what is there to prevent you?'

'Habits, Master George — habits,' replied the earl, 'which to young men are like threads of silk, so lightly are they worn, so soon broken; but which hang on our old limbs as if time had stiffened them into gyves of iron. To go to Scotland for a brief space were but labour in vain; and when I think of abiding there, I cannot bring myself to leave my old master, to whom I fancy myself sometimes useful, and whose weal and woe I have shared for so many years. But Dalgarno shall be a Scottish noble.'

'Has he visited the North?' said Heriot.

'He was there last year, and made such a report of the country that the Prince has expressed a longing to see it.'

'Lord Dalgarno is in high grace with his Highness and the Duke of Buckingham?' observed the goldsmith.

'He is so,' answered the earl; 'I pray it may be for the advantage of them all. The Prince is just and equitable in his sentiments, though cold and stately in his manners, and very obstinate in his most trifling purposes; and the duke, noble and gallant, and generous and open, is fiery, ambitious, and impetuous. Dalgarno has none of these faults, and such as he may have of his own may perchance be corrected by the society in which he moves. See, here he comes.'

Lord Dalgarno accordingly advanced from the farther end of the alley to the bench on which his father and his guests were seated, so that Nigel had full leisure to peruse his countenance and figure. He was dressed point-device, and almost to extremity, in the splendid fashion of the time, which suited well with his age, probably about five-and-twenty, with a noble form and fine countenance, in which last could easily be traced the manly features of his father, but softened by a more habitual air of assiduous courtesy than the stubborn old earl had ever condescended to assume towards the world in general. In other respects, his address was gallant, free, and unencumbered either by pride or ceremony — far remote certainly from the charge either of haughty coldness or forward impetuosity; and so far his father had justly freed him from the marked faults which he ascribed to the manners of the Prince and his favourite Buckingham.

While the old earl presented his young acquaintance Lord Glenvarloch to his son, as one whom he would have him love and honour, Nigel marked the countenance of Lord Dalgarno closely, to see if he could detect aught of that secret dislike which the King had, in one of his broken expostulations, seemed to intimate, as arising from a clashing of interests betwixt his new friend and the great Buckingham. But nothing of this was visible; on the contrary, Lord Dalgarno received his new acquaintance with the open frankness and courtesy which makes conquest at once, when addressed to the feelings of an ingenuous young man.

It need hardly be told that his open and friendly address met equally ready and cheerful acceptance from Nigel Olifaunt. For many months, and while a youth not much above two-and-twenty, he had been restrained by circumstances from the conversation of his equals. When, on his father's sudden death, he left the Low Countries for Scotland, he had found himself involved, to all appearance inextricably, with the details of the law, all of which threatened to end in the alienation of the patrimony which should support his hereditary rank. His term of sincere mourning, joined to injured pride, and the swelling of the heart under unexpected and undeserved misfortune, together with the uncertainty attending the issue of his affairs, had induced the young Lord of Glenvarloch to live, while in Scotland, in a very private and reserved manner. How he had passed his time in London, the reader is acquainted with. But this melancholy and secluded course of life was

neither agreeable to his age nor to his temper, which was genial and sociable. He hailed, therefore, with sincere pleasure the approaches which a young man of his own age and rank made towards him; and when he had exchanged with Lord Dalgarno some of those words and signals by which, as surely as by those of freemasonry, young people recognise a mutual wish to be agreeable to each other, it seemed as if the two noblemen had been acquainted for some time.

Just as this tacit intercourse had been established, one of Lord Huntinglen's attendants came down the alley, marshallling onwards a man dressed in black buckram, who followed him with tolerable speed, considering that, according to his sense of reverence and propriety, he kept his body bent and parallel to the horizon from the moment that he came in sight of the company to which he was about to be presented.

'Who is this, you cuckoldy knave,' said the old lord, who had retained the keen appetite and impatience of a Scottish baron even during a long alienation from his native country; 'and why does John Cook, with a murrain to him, keep back dinner?'

'I believe we are ourselves responsible for this person's intrusion,' said George Heriot: 'this is the scrivener whom we desired to see. Look up, man, and see us in the face as an honest man should, instead of bearing thy noddle charged against us thus, like a battering-ram.'

The scrivener did look up accordingly, with the action of an automaton which suddenly obeys the impulse of a pressed spring. But, strange to tell, not even the haste he had made to attend his patron's mandate — a business, as Master Heriot's message expressed, of weight and importance — nay, not even the state of depression in which, out of sheer humility doubtless, he had his head stooped to the earth, from the moment he had trod the demesnes of the Earl of Huntinglen, had called any colour into his countenance. The drops stood on his brow from haste and toil, but his cheek was still pale and tallow-coloured as before; nay, what seemed stranger, his very hair, when he raised his head, hung down on either cheek as straight and sleek and undisturbed as it was when we first introduced him to our readers, seated at his quiet and humble desk.

Lord Dalgarno could not forbear a stifled laugh at the ridiculous and Puritanical figure which presented itself like a starved anatomy to the company, and whispered at the same time into Lord Glenvarloch's ear —

'The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon,
Where got'st thou that goose-look?'

Nigel was too little acquainted with the English stage to understand a quotation which had already grown matter of common allusion in London. Lord Dalgarno saw that he was not understood, and continued, 'That fellow, by his visage, should either be a saint or a most hypocritical rogue; and such is my excellent opinion of human nature, that I always suspect the worst. But they seem deep in business. Will you take a turn with me in the garden, my lord, or will you remain a member of the serious conclave?'

'With you, my lord, most willingly,' said Nigel; and they were turning away accordingly, when George Heriot, with the formality belonging to his station, observed that, 'As their business concerned Lord Glenvarloch, he had better remain, to make himself master of it and witness to it.'

'My presence is utterly needless, my good lord, and my best friend, Master Heriot,' said the young nobleman. 'I shall understand nothing the better for cumbering you with my ignorance in these matters; and can only say at the end, as I now say at the beginning, that I dare not take the helm out of the hand of the kind pilots who have already guided my course within sight of a fair and unhoped-for haven. Whatever you recommend to me as fitting, I shall sign and seal; and the import of the deeds I shall better learn by a brief explanation from Master Heriot, if he will bestow so much trouble in my behalf, than by a thousand learned words and law terms from this person of skill.'

'He is right,' said Lord Huntinglen — 'our young friend is right, in confiding these matters to you and me, Master George Heriot: he has not misplaced his confidence.'

Master George Heriot cast a long look after the two young noblemen, who had now walked down the alley arm-in-arm, and at length said, 'He hath not indeed misplaced his confidence, as your lordship well and truly says; but, nevertheless, he is not in the right path; for it behoves every man to become acquainted with his own affairs, so soon as he hath any that are worth attending to.'

When he had made this observation, they applied themselves, with the scrivener, to look into various papers, and to direct in what manner writings should be drawn, which might at once afford sufficient security to those who were to advance the money, and at the same time preserve the right of the

young nobleman to redeem the family estate, provided he should obtain the means of doing so, by the expected reimbursement from the Scottish Exchequer or otherwise. It is needless to enter into those details. But it is not unimportant to mention, as an illustration of character, that Heriot went into the most minute legal details with a precision which showed that experience had made him master even of the intricacies of Scottish conveyancing; and that the Earl of Huntinglen, though far less acquainted with technical detail, suffered no step of the business to pass over, until he had attained a general but distinct idea of its import and its propriety.

They seemed to be admirably seconded in their benevolent intentions towards the young Lord Glenvarloch by the skill and eager zeal of the scrivener, whom Heriot had introduced to this piece of business, the most important which Andrew had ever transacted in his life, and the particulars of which were moreover agitated in his presence between an actual earl and one whose wealth and character might entitle him to be alderman of his ward, if not to be lord mayor, in his turn.

While they were thus in eager conversation on business, the good earl even forgetting the calls of his appetite and the delay of dinner in his anxiety to see that the scrivener received proper instructions, and that all was rightly weighed and considered, before dismissing him to engross the necessary deeds, the two young men walked together on the terrace which overhung the river, and talked on the topics which Lord Dalgarno, the elder and the more experienced, thought most likely to interest his new friend.

These naturally regarded the pleasures attending a court life; and Lord Dalgarno expressed much surprise at understanding that Nigel proposed an instant return to Scotland.

'You are jesting with me,' he said. 'All the court rings—it is needless to mince it—with the extraordinary success of your suit, against the highest interest, it is said, now influencing the horizon at Whitehall. Men think of you—talk of you—fix their eyes on you—ask each other, "Who is this young Scottish lord, who has stepped so far in a single day?" They augur, in whispers to each other, how high and how far you may push your fortune; and all that you design to make of it is to return to Scotland, eat raw oatmeal cakes, baked upon a peat-fire, have your hand shaken by every loon of a blue-bonnet who chooses to dub you cousin, though your relationship comes by Noah, drink Scots twopenny ale, eat half-starved red-deer

venison, when you can kill it, ride upon a galloway, and be called "my right honourable and maist worthy lord" !

'There is no great gaiety in the prospect before me, I confess,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'even if your father and good Master Heriot should succeed in putting my affairs on some footing of plausible hope. And yet I trust to do something for my vassals, as my ancestors before me, and to teach my children, as I have myself been taught, to make some personal sacrifices, if they be necessary, in order to maintain with dignity the situation in which they are placed by Providence.'

Lord Dalgarno, after having once or twice stifled his laughter during this speech, at length broke out into a fit of mirth so hearty and so resistless that, angry as he was, the call of sympathy swept Nigel along with him, and, despite of himself, he could not forbear to join in a burst of laughter which he thought not only causeless, but almost impertinent.

He soon recollected himself, however; and said, in a tone qualified to allay Lord Dalgarno's extreme mirth, 'This is all well, my lord; but how am I to understand your merriment?' Lord Dalgarno only answered him with redoubled peals of laughter, and at length held by Lord Glenvarloch's cloak, as if to prevent his falling down on the ground, in the extremity of his convulsion.

At length, while Nigel stood half abashed, half angry, at becoming thus the subject of his new acquaintance's ridicule, and was only restrained from expressing his resentment against the son by a sense of the obligations he owed the father, Lord Dalgarno recovered himself, and spoke in a half-broken voice, his eyes still running with tears. 'I crave your pardon, my dear Lord Glenvarloch — ten thousand times do I crave your pardon. But that last picture of rural dignity, accompanied by your grave and angry surprise at my laughing at what would have made any court-bred hound laugh, that had but so much as bayed the moon once from the courtyard at Whitehall, totally overcame me.' Why, my liefast and dearest lord, you, a young and handsome fellow, with high birth, a title, and the name of an estate, so well received by the King at your first starting as makes your further progress scarce matter of doubt, if you know how to improve it — for the King has already said you are a "braw lad, and well studied in the more humane letters" — you, too, whom all the women, and the very marked beauties of the court, desire to see, because you came from Leyden, were born in Scotland, and have gained a hard-con-

tested suit in England — you, I say, with a person like a prince, an eye of fire, and a wit as quick, to think of throwing your cards on the table, when the game is in your very hand, running back to the frozen North, and marrying — let me see — a tall, stalking, blue-eyed, fair-skinned, bony wench, with eighteen quarters in her scutcheon — a sort of Lot's wife, newly descended from her pedestal, and with her to shut yourself up in your tapestried chamber! Uh, gad! Swouns, I shall never survive the idea!

It is seldom that youth, however high-minded, is able, from mere strength of character and principle, to support itself against the force of ridicule. Half angry, half mortified, and to say truth, half ashamed of his more manly and better purpose, Nigel was unable, and flattered himself it was unnecessary, to play the part of a rigid moral patriot in presence of a young man whose current fluency of language, as well as his experience in the highest circles of society, gave him, in spite of Nigel's better and firmer thoughts, a temporary ascendancy over him. He sought, therefore, to compromise the matter, and avoid farther debate, by frankly owning that, if to return to his own country were not his choice, it was at least a matter of necessity. 'His affairs,' he said, 'were unsettled, his income precarious.'

'And where is he whose affairs are settled, or whose income is less than precarious, that is to be found in attendance on the court?' said Lord Dalgarno: 'all are either losing or winning. Those who have wealth come hither to get rid of it, while the happy gallants who, like you and I, dear Glenvarloch, have little or none, have every chance to be sharers in their spoils.'

'I have no ambition of that sort,' said Nigel, 'and if I had, I must tell you plainly, Lord Dalgarno, I have not the means to do so. I can scarce as yet call the suit I wear my own: I owe it, and I do not blush to say so, to the friendship of yonder good man.'

'I will not laugh again, if I can help it,' said Lord Dalgarno. 'But, Lord! that you should have gone to a wealthy goldsmith for your habit; why, I could have brought you to an honest, confiding tailor, who should have furnished you with half-a-dozen, merely for love of the little word "lord" which you place before your name; and then your goldsmith, if he be really a friendly goldsmith, should have equipped you with such a purse of fair rose-nobles as would have bought you thrice as many suits, or done better things for you.'

'I do not understand these fashions, my lord,' said Nigel,

his displeasure mastering his shame; 'were I to attend the court of my sovereign, it should be when I could maintain, without shifting or borrowing, the dress and retinue which my rank requires.'

'Which my rank requires!' said Lord Dalgarno, repeating his last words; 'that, now, is as good as if my father had spoke it. I fancy you would love to move to court like him, followed by a round score of old blue-bottles, with white heads and red noses, with bucklers and broadswords, which their hands, trembling betwixt age and strong waters, can make no use of; as many huge silver badges on their arms, to show whose fools they are, as would furnish forth a court cupboard of plate—rogues fit for nothing but to fill our antechambers with the flavour of onions and *genièvre*—pah!'

'The poor knaves!' said Lord Glenvarloch; 'they have served your father, it may be, in the wars. What would become of them were he to turn them off?'

'Why, let them go to the hospital,' said Dalgarno, 'or to the bridge-end, to sell switches. The King is a better man than my father, and you see those who have served in *his* wars do so every day. Or, when their blue coats were well worn out, they would make rare scarecrows. Here is a fellow, now, comes down the walk; the stoutest raven dared not come within a yard of that copper nose. I tell you, there is more service, as you will soon see, in my valet of the chamber, and such a lither lad as my page Lutin, than there is in a score of these old memorials of the Douglas wars,¹ where they cut each other's throats for the chance of finding twelve pennies Scots on the person of the slain. Marry, my lord, to make amends, they will eat mouldy victuals and drink stale ale, as if their bellies were puncheons. But the dinner bell is going to sound—hark, it is clearing its rusty throat with a preliminary jowl. That is another clamorous relic of antiquity that, were I master, should soon be at the bottom of the Thames. How the foul fiend can it interest the peasants and mechanics in the Strand to know that the Earl of Huntinglen is sitting down to dinner? But my father looks our way; we must not be late for the grace, or we shall be in *dis-grace*, if you will forgive a quibble which would have made his Majesty laugh. You will find us all of a piece, and, having been accustomed to eat in saucers abroad, I am ashamed you should witness our larded capons, our mountains of beef, and oceans of brewis, as large as Highland hills

¹ See Note 17.

and lochs ; but you shall see better cheer to-morrow. Where lodge you ? I will call for you. I must be your guide through the peopled desert to certain enchanted lands, which you will scarce discover without chart and pilot. Where lodge you ?

'I will meet you in Paul's,' said Nigel, a good deal embarrassed, 'at any hour you please to name.'

'Oh, you would be private,' said the young lord. 'Nay, fear not me—I will be no intruder. But we have attained this huge larder of flesh, fowl, and fish. I marvel the oaken boards groan not under it.'

They had indeed arrived in the dining-parlour of the mansion, where the table was superabundantly loaded, and where the number of attendants to a certain extent vindicated the sarcasms of the young nobleman. The chaplain and Sir Mungo Malagrowth were of the party. The latter complimented Lord Glenvarloch upon the impression he had made at court. 'One would have thought ye had brought the apple of discord in your pouch, my lord, or that you were the very firebrand of whilk Althea was delivered, and that she had lain-in in a barrel of gunpowder ; for the King, and the Prince, and the Duke have been by the lugs about ye, and so have many more, that kendna before this blessed day that there was such a man living on the face of the earth.'

'Mind your victuals, Sir Mungo,' said the earl ; 'they get cold while you talk.'

'Troth, and that needsna, my lord,' said the knight ; 'your lordship's dinners seldom scald one's mouth : the serving-men are turning auld, like oursells, my lord, and it is far between the kitchen and the ha'.'

With this little explosion of his spleen, Sir Mungo remained satisfied, until the dishes were removed, when, fixing his eyes on the brave new doublet of Lord Dalgarno, he complimented him on his economy, pretending to recognise it as the same which his father had worn in Edinburgh in the Spanish ambassador's time. Lord Dalgarno, too much a man of the world to be moved by anything from such a quarter, proceeded to crack some nuts with great deliberation, as he replied, that 'The doublet was in some sort his father's, as it was likely to cost him fifty pounds some day soon.' Sir Mungo forthwith proceeded in his own way to convey this agreeable intelligence to the earl, observing, that 'His son was a better maker of bargains than his lordship, for he had brought a doublet as rich as that his lordship wore when the Spanish ambassador was at

Holyrood, and it had cost him but fifty pounds Scots.' — 'That was no fool's bargain, my lord.'

'Pounds sterling, if you please, Sir Mungo,' answered the earl, calmly; 'and a fool's bargain it is, in all the tenses. Dalgarno *was* a fool when he bought; I *will* be a fool when I pay; and you, Sir Mungo, craving your pardon, *are* a fool *in præsentia* for speaking of what concerns you not.'

So saying, the earl addressed himself to the serious business of the table, and sent the wine around with a profusion which increased the hilarity, but rather threatened the temperance, of the company, until their joviality was interrupted by the annunciation that the scrivener had engrossed such deeds as required to be presently executed.

George Heriot rose from the table, observing, that wine-cups and legal documents were unseemly neighbours. The earl asked the scrivener if they had laid a trencher and set a cup for him in the buttery; and received the respectful answer, that 'Heaven forbid he should be such an ungracious beast as to eat or drink until his lordship's pleasure was performed.'

'Thou shalt eat before thou goest,' said Lord Huntinglen; 'and I will have thee try, moreover, whether a cup of sack cannot bring some colour into these cheeks of thine. It were a shame to my household, thou shouldst glide out into the Strand after such a spectre-fashion as thou now wearest. Look to it, Dalgarno, for the honour of our roof is concerned.'

Lord Dalgarno gave directions that the man should be attended to. Lord Glenvarloch and the citizen, in the meanwhile, signed and interchanged, and thus closed a transaction of which the principal party concerned understood little, save that it was under the management of a zealous and faithful friend, who undertook that the money should be forthcoming, and the estate released from forfeiture, by payment of the stipulated sum for which it stood pledged, and that at the term of Lambmas, and at the hour of noon, and beside the tomb of the Regent Earl of Murray, in the High Kirk of St. Giles, at Edinburgh, being the day and place assigned for such redemption.¹

When this business was transacted, the old earl would fain have renewed his carouse; but the citizen, alleging the importance of the deeds he had about him, and the business he

¹ As each covenant in those days of accuracy had a special place nominated for execution, the tomb of the Regent Earl of Murray in St. Giles's church was frequently assigned for the purpose.

had to transact betimes the next morning, not only refused to return to table, but carried with him to his barge Lord Glenvarloch, who might, perhaps, have been otherwise found more tractable.

When they were seated in the boat, and fairly once more afloat on the river, George Heriot looked back seriously on the mansion they had left. 'There live,' he said, 'the old fashion and the new. The father is like a noble old broadsword, but barned with rust, from neglect and inactivity ; the son is your modern rapier, well-mounted, fairly gilt, and fashioned to the taste of the time — and it is time must evince if the metal be as good as the show. God grant it prove so, says an old friend to the family.'

Nothing of consequence passed betwixt them, until Lord Glenvarloch, landing at Paul's Wharf, took leave of his friend the citizen, and retired to his own apartment ; where his attendant, Richie, not a little elevated with the events of the day, and with the hospitality of Lord Huntinglen's housekeeping, gave a most splendid account of them to the buxom Dame Nelly, who rejoiced to hear that the sun at length was shining upon what Richie called 'the right side of the hedge.'

CHAPTER XI

You are not for the manner nor the times.
They have their vices now most like to virtues ;
You cannot know them apart by any difference.
They wear the same clothes, eat the same meat,
Sleep i' the self-same beds, ride in those coaches,
Or, very like, four horses in a coach,
As the best men and women.

BEN JONSON.

ON the following morning, while Nigel, his breakfast finished, was thinking how he should employ the day, there was a little bustle upon the stairs which attracted his attention, and presently entered Dame Nelly, blushing like scarlet and scarce able to bring out — ‘A young nobleman, sir ; no one less,’ she added, drawing her hand slightly over her lips, ‘would be saucy — a young nobleman, sir, to await on you !’

And she was followed into the little cabin by Lord Dalgarno, gay, easy, disembarassed, and apparently as much pleased to rejoin his new acquaintance as if he had found him in the apartments of a palace. Nigel, on the contrary, for youth is slave to such circumstances, was discountenanced and mortified at being surprised by so splendid a gallant in a chamber which, at the moment the elegant and high-dressed cavalier appeared in it, seemed to its inhabitant yet lower, narrower, darker, and meaner than it had ever shown before. He would have made some apology for the situation, but Lord Dalgarno cut him short.

‘Not a word of it,’ he said — ‘not a single word. I know why you ride at anchor here ; but I can keep counsel — so pretty a hostess would recommend worse quarters.’

‘On my word — on my honour,’ said Lord Glenvarloch —

‘Nay — nay, make no words of the matter,’ said Lord Dalgarno. ‘I am no tell-tale, nor shall I cross your walk ; there is game enough in the forest, thank Heaven, and I can strike a doe for myself.’

All this he said in so significant a manner, and the explanation which he had adopted seemed to put Lord Glenvarloch's gallantry on so respectable a footing, that Nigel ceased to try to undeceive him; and less ashamed, perhaps (for such is human weakness), of supposed vice than of real poverty, changed the discourse to something else, and left poor Dame Nelly's reputation and his own at the mercy of the young courtier's misconstruction.

He offered refreshments with some hesitation. Lord Dalgarno had long since breakfasted, but had just come from playing a set of tennis, he said, and would willingly taste a cup of the pretty hostess's single beer. This was easily procured, was drunk, was commended, and, as the hostess failed not to bring the cup herself, Lord Dalgarno profited by the opportunity to take a second and more attentive view of her, and then gravely drank to her husband's health, with an almost imperceptible nod to Lord Glenvarloch. Dame Nelly was much honoured, smoothed her apron down with her hands, and said — 'Her John was greatly and truly honoured by their lordships; he was a kind, painstaking man for his family as was in the alley, or indeed as far north as Paul's Chain.'

She would have proceeded probably to state the difference betwixt their ages, as the only alloy to their nuptial happiness; but her lodger, who had no mind to be farther exposed to his gay friend's raillery, gave her, contrary to his wont, a signal to leave the room.

Lord Dalgarno looked after her, then looked at Glenvarloch, shook his head, and repeated the well-known lines —

'My lord, beware of jealousy;
It is the green-eyed monster which doth make
The meat it feeds on.'

But come,' he said, changing his tone, 'I know not why I should worry you thus — I who have so many follies of my own — when I should rather make excuse for being here at all, and tell you wherefore I came.'

So saying, he reached a seat, and, placing another for Lord Glenvarloch, in spite of his anxious haste to anticipate this act of courtesy, he proceeded in the same tone of easy familiarity:

'We are neighbours, my lord, and are just made known to each other. Now, I know enough of the dear North to be well aware that Scottish neighbours must be either dear friends or deadly enemies — must either walk hand-in-hand or stand sword-

point to sword-point ; so I choose the hand-in-hand, unless you should reject my proffer.'

'How were it possible, my lord,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'to refuse what is offered so frankly, even if your father had not been a second father to me?' And, as he took Lord Dalgarno's hand, he added, 'I have, I think, lost no time, since, during one day's attendance at court, I have made a kind friend and a powerful enemy.'

'The friend thanks you,' replied Lord Dalgarno, 'for your just opinion ; but, my dear Glenvarloch — or rather, for titles are too formal between us of the better file, what is your Christian name?'

'Nigel,' replied Lord Glenvarloch.

'Then we will be Nigel and Malcolm to each other,' said his visitor, 'and my lord to the plebeian world around us. But I was about to ask you whom you supposed your enemy?'

'No less than the all-powerful favourite, the great Duke of Buckingham.'

'You dream ! What could possess you with such an opinion?' said Dalgarno.

'He told me so himself,' replied Glenvarloch ; 'and, in so doing, dealt frankly and honourably with me.'

'Oh, you know him not yet,' said his companion ; 'the duke is moulded of an hundred noble and fiery qualities, that prompt him, like a generous horse, to spring aside in impatience at the least obstacle to his forward course. But he means not what he says in such passing heats. I can do more with him, I thank Heaven, than most who are around him ; you shall go visit him with me, and you will see how you shall be received.'

'I told you, my lord,' said Glenvarloch, firmly, and with some haughtiness, 'the Duke of Buckingham, without the least offence, declared himself my enemy in the face of the court, and he shall retract that aggression as publicly as it was given, ere I will make the slightest advance towards him.'

'You would act becomingly in every other case,' said Lord Dalgarno, 'but here you are wrong. In the court horizon, Buckingham is lord of the ascendant, and as he is adverse or favouring, so sinks or rises the fortune of a suitor. The King would bid you remember your Phædrus —

Arripiens geminas, ripis cedentibus, ollas —

and so forth. You are the vase of earth ; beware of knocking yourself against the vase of iron.'

'The vase of earth,' said Glenvarloch, 'will avoid the encounter, by getting ashore out of the current: I mean to go no more to court.'

'Oh, to court you necessarily must go; you will find your Scottish suit move ill without it, for there is both patronage and favour necessary to enforce the sign-manual you have obtained. Of that we will speak more hereafter; but tell me in the meanwhile, my dear Nigel, whether you did not wonder to see me here so early?'

'I am surprised that you could find me out in this obscure corner,' said Lord Glenvarloch.

'My page Lutin is a very devil for that sort of discovery,' replied Lord Dalgarno. 'I have but to say, "Goblin, I would know where he or she dwells," and he guides me thither as if by art magic.'

'I hope he waits not now in the street, my lord,' said Nigel. 'I will send my servant to seek him.'

'Do not concern yourself; he is by this time,' said Lord Dalgarno, 'playing at hustle-cap and chuck-farthing with the most blackguard imps upon the wharf, unless he hath foregone his old customs.'

'Are you not afraid,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'that in such company his morals may become depraved?'

'Let his company look to their own,' answered Lord Dalgarno, coolly; 'for it will be a company of real fiends in which Lutin cannot teach more mischief than he can learn: he is, I thank the gods, most thoroughly versed in evil for his years. I am spared the trouble of looking after his moralities, for nothing can make them either better or worse.'

'I wonder you can answer this to his parents, my lord,' said Nigel.

'I wonder where I should find his parents,' replied his companion, 'to render an account to them.'

'He may be an orphan,' said Lord Nigel; 'but surely, being a page in your lordship's family, his parents must be of rank.'

'Of as high rank as the gallows could exalt them to,' replied Lord Dalgarno, with the same indifference; 'they were both hanged, I believe—at least the gipsies, from whom I bought him five years ago, intimated as much to me. You are surprised at this, now. But is it not better that, instead of a lazy, conceited, whey-faced slip of gentility, to whom, in your old-world idea of the matter, I was bound to stand Sir Peda-

gogue, and see that he washed his hands and face, said his prayers, learned his *accidens*, spoke no naughty words, brushed his hat, and wore his best doublet only on Sunday — that, instead of such a Jacky Goodchild, I should have something like this ?

He whistled shrill and clear, and the page he spoke of darted into the room, almost with the effect of an actual apparition. From his height he seemed but fifteen, but, from his face, might be two or even three years older, very neatly made and richly dressed ; with a thin bronzed visage, which marked his gipsy descent, and a pair of sparkling black eyes, which seemed almost to pierce through those whom he looked at.

‘There he is,’ said Lord Dalgarno, ‘fit for every element ; prompt to execute every command, good, bad, or indifferent ; unmatched in his tribe as rogue, thief, and liar.’

‘All which qualities,’ said the undaunted page, ‘have each in turn stood your lordship in stead.’

‘Out, ye imp of Satan !’ said his master — ‘vanish — begone — or my conjuring-rod goes about your ears.’ The boy turned, and disappeared as suddenly as he had entered. ‘You see,’ said Lord Dalgarno, ‘that, in choosing my household, the best regard I can pay to gentle blood is to exclude it from my service : that very gallows-bird were enough to corrupt a whole antechamber of pages,¹ though they were descended from kings and kaisers.’

‘I can scarce think that a nobleman should need the offices of such an attendant as your goblin,’ said Nigel ; ‘you are but jesting with my inexperience.’

‘Time will show whether I jest or not, my dear Nigel,’ replied Dalgarno ; ‘in the meantime, I have to propose to you to take the advantage of the flood-tide, to run up the river for pastime ; and at noon I trust you will dine with me.’

Nigel acquiesced in a plan which promised so much amusement ; and his new friend and he, attended by Lutin and Moniplies, who greatly resembled, when thus associated, the conjunction of a bear and a monkey, took possession of Lord Dalgarno’s wherry, which, with its badged watermen, bearing his lordship’s crest on their arms, lay in readiness to receive them. The air was delightful upon the river, and the lively conversation of Lord Dalgarno added zest to the pleasures of the little voyage. He could not only give an account of the various public buildings and noblemen’s houses which they

¹ See Note 18.

passed in ascending the Thames, but knew how to season his information with abundance of anecdote, political innuendo, and personal scandal; if he had not very much wit, he was at least completely master of the fashionable tone which in that time, as in ours, more than amply supplies any deficiency of the kind.

It was a style of conversation entirely new to his companion, as was the world which Lord Dalgarno opened to his observation; and it is no wonder that Nigel, notwithstanding his natural good sense and high spirit, admitted, more readily than seemed consistent with either, the tone of authoritative instruction which his new friend assumed towards him. There would, indeed, have been some difficulty in making a stand. To attempt a high and stubborn tone of morality, in answer to the light strain of Lord Dalgarno's conversation, which kept on the frontiers between jest and earnest, would have seemed pedantic and ridiculous; and every attempt which Nigel made to combat his companion's propositions, by reasoning as jocose as his own, only showed his inferiority in that gay species of controversy. And it must be owned besides, though internally disapproving much of what he heard, Lord Glenvarloch, young as he was in society, became less alarmed by the language and manners of his new associate than in prudence he ought to have been.

Lord Dalgarno was unwilling to startle his proselyte by insisting upon any topic which appeared particularly to jar with his habits or principles; and he blended his mirth and his earnest so dexterously, that it was impossible for Nigel to discover how far he was serious in his propositions, or how far they flowed from a wild and extravagant spirit of raillery. And, ever and anon, those flashes of spirit and honour crossed his conversation, which seemed to intimate that, when stirred to action by some adequate motive, Lord Dalgarno would prove something very different from the court-haunting and ease-loving voluptuary which he was pleased to represent as his chosen character.

As they returned down the river, Lord Glenvarloch remarked that the boat passed the mansion of Lord Huntinglen, and noticed the circumstance to Lord Dalgarno, observing, that he thought they were to have dined there. 'Surely no,' said the young nobleman, 'I have more mercy on you than to gorge you a second time with raw beef and canary wine. I propose something better for you, I promise you, than such a second Scythian festivity. And as for my father, he proposes to dine to-day with my grave, ancient Earl of Northampton, whilome that

gogue, and see that he washed his hands and face, said his prayers, learned his *accidens*, spoke no naughty words, brushed his hat, and wore his best doublet only on Sunday — that, instead of such a Jacky Goodchild, I should have something like this?’

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¹ See Note 18.

but immediately answered, 'You may have known many things, friend; but, in the meanwhile, you do not know what principally concerns your master, namely, how to carry his cloak, so as to show to advantage the gold-laced seams and the lining of sables. See how Lutin holds the sword, with the cloak cast partly over it, yet so as to set off the embossed hilt and the silver work of the mounting. Give your familiar your sword, Nigel,' he continued, addressing Lord Glenvarloch, 'that he may practise a lesson in an art so necessary.'

'Is it altogether prudent,' said Nigel, unclasping his weapon and giving it to Richie, 'to walk entirely unarmed?'

'And wherefore not?' said his companion. 'You are thinking now of Auld Reekie, as my father fondly calls your good Scottish capital, where there is such bandying of private feuds and public factions that a man of any note shall not cross your High Street twice without endangering his life thrice.¹ Here, sir, no brawling in the street is permitted. Your bull-headed citizen takes up the case so soon as the sword is drawn, and "clubs" is the word.'

'And a hard word it is,' said Richie, 'as my brain-pan kens at this blessed moment.'

'Were I your master, sirrah,' said Lord Dalgarno, 'I would make your brain-pan, as you call it, boil over, were you to speak a word in my presence before you were spoken to.'

Richie murmured some indistinct answer, but took the hint, and ranked himself behind his master along with Lutin, who failed not to expose his new companion to the ridicule of the passers-by, by mimicking, as often as he could do so unobserved by Richie, his stiff and upright stalking gait and discontented physiognomy.

'And tell me now, my dear Malcolm,' said Nigel, 'where we are bending our course, and whether we shall dine at an apartment of yours?'

'An apartment of mine! Yes, surely,' answered Lord Dalgarno, 'you shall dine at an apartment of mine, and an apartment of yours, and of twenty gallants besides; and where the board shall present better cheer, better wine, and better attendance than if our whole united exhibitions went to maintain it. We are going to the most noted ordinary of London.'

'That is, in common language, an inn, or a tavern?' said Nigel.

'An inn, or a tavern, my most green and simple friend!' exclaimed Lord Dalgarno. 'No, no — these are places where

¹ See Skirmishes in the Public Streets. Note 20.

greasy citizens take pipe and pot, where the knavish pettifoggers of the law sponge on their most unhappy victims; where Templars crack jests as empty as their nuts, and where small gentry imbibe such thin potations that they get dropsies instead of getting drunk. An ordinary is a late invented institution, sacred to Bacchus and Comus, where the choicest noble gallants of the time meet with the first and most ethereal wits of the age; where the wine is the very soul of the choicest grape, refined as the genius of the poet, and ancient and generous as the blood of the nobles. And then the fare is something beyond your ordinary gross terrestrial food! Sea and land are ransacked to supply it; and the invention of six ingenious cooks kept eternally upon the rack to make their art hold pace with, and if possible enhance, the exquisite quality of the materials.

‘By all which rhapsody,’ said Lord Glenvarloch, ‘I can only understand, as I did before, that we are going to a choice tavern, where we shall be handsomely entertained, on paying probably as handsome a reckoning.’

‘Reckoning!’ exclaimed Lord Dalgarno in the same tone as before, ‘perish the peasantly phrase! What profanation! Monsieur le Chevalier de Beaujeu, pink of Paris and flower of Gascony — he who can tell the age of his wine by the bare smell — who distils his sauces in an alembic by the aid of Lully’s philosophy — who carves with such exquisite precision, that he gives to noble, knight, and squire the portion of the pheasant which exactly accords with his rank — nay, he who shall divide a beccafico into twelve parts with such scrupulous exactness, that of twelve guests not one shall have the advantage of the other in a hair’s-breadth, or the twentieth part of a drachm, yet you talk of him and of a reckoning in the same breath! Why, man, he is the well-known and general referee in all matters affecting the mysteries of passage, hazard, in-and-in, penneech, and verquere, and what not. Why, Beaujeu is king of the card-pack, and duke of the dice-box — *he* call a reckoning like a green-aproned, red-nosed son of the vulgar spigot! Oh, my dearest Nigel, what a word you have spoken, and of what a person! That you know him not is your only apology for such blasphemy; and yet I scarce hold it adequate, for to have been a day in London and not to know Beaujeu is a crime of its own kind. But you *shall* know him this blessed moment, and shall learn to hold yourself in horror for the enormities you have uttered.’

'Well, but mark you,' said Nigel, 'this worthy chevalier keeps not all this good cheer at his own cost, does he?'

'No — no,' answered Lord Dalgarno; 'there is a sort of ceremony which my chevalier's friends and intimates understand, but with which you have no business at present. There is, as Majesty might say, a *symbolum* to be disbursed — in other words, a mutual exchange of courtesies takes place betwixt Beaujeu and his guests. He makes them a free present of the dinner and wine, as often as they choose to consult their own felicity by frequenting his house at the hour of noon, and they, in gratitude, make the chevalier a present of a Jacobus. Then you must know that, besides Comus and Bacchus, that princess of sub-lunary affairs, the Diva Fortuna, is frequently worshipped at Beaujeu's, and he, as officiating high priest, hath, as in reason he should, a considerable advantage from a share of the sacrifice.'

'In other words,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'this man keeps a gaming-house.'

'A house in which you may certainly game,' said Lord Dalgarno, 'as you may in your own chamber, if you have a mind; nay, I remember old Tom Tally played a hand at put for a wager with Quinze le Va, the Frenchman, during morning prayers in St. Paul's; the morning was misty, and the parson drowsy, and the whole audience consisted of themselves and a blind woman, and so they escaped detection.'

'For all this, Malcolm,' said the young lord, gravely, 'I cannot dine with you to-day at this same ordinary.'

'And wherefore, in the name of Heaven, should you draw back from your word?' said Lord Dalgarno.

'I do not retract my word, Malcolm; but I am bound, by an early promise to my father, never to enter the doors of a gaming-house.'

'I tell you this is none,' said Lord Dalgarno; 'it is but, in plain terms, an eating-house, arranged on civil terms, and frequented by better company, than others in this town; and if some of them do amuse themselves with cards and hazard, they are men of honour, and who play as such, and for no more than they can well afford to lose. It was not, and could not be, such houses that your father desired you to avoid. Besides, he might as well have made you swear you would never take the accommodation of an inn, tavern, eating-house, or place of public reception of any kind; for there is no such place of public resort but where your eyes may be contaminated by the sight of a pack of pieces of painted pasteboard, and your ears profaned by

the rattle of those little spotted cubes of ivory. The difference is, that where we go we may happen to see persons of quality amusing themselves with a game; and in the ordinary houses you will meet bullies and sharpers, who will strive either to cheat or to swagger you out of your money.'

'I am sure you would not willingly lead me to do what is wrong,' said Nigel; 'but my father had a horror of games of chance, religious I believe, as well as prudential. He judged, from I know not what circumstance, a fallacious one I should hope, that I had a propensity to such courses, and I have told you the promise which he exacted from me.'

'Now, by my honour,' said Dalgarno, 'what you have said affords the strongest reason for my insisting that you go with me. A man who would shun any danger should first become acquainted with its real bearing and extent, and that in the company of a confidential guide and guard. Do you think I myself game? Good faith, my father's oaks grow too far from London, and stand too fast rooted in the rocks of Perthshire, for me to troll them down with a die, though I have seen whole forests go down like nine-pins. No, no — these are sports for the wealthy Southron, not for the poor Scottish noble. The place is an eating-house, and as such you and I will use it. If others use it to game in, it is their fault, but neither that of the house nor ours.'

Unsatisfied with this reasoning, Nigel still insisted upon the promise he had given to his father, until his companion appeared rather displeased, and disposed to impute to him injurious and unhandsome suspicions. Lord Glenvarloch could not stand this change of tone. He recollected that much was due from him to Lord Dalgarno, on account of his father's ready and efficient friendship, and something also on account of the frank manner in which the young man himself had offered him his intimacy. He had no reason to doubt his assurances that the house where they were about to dine did not fall under the description of places to which his father's prohibition referred; and finally, he was strong in his own resolution to resist every temptation to join in games of chance. He therefore pacified Lord Dalgarno by intimating his willingness to go along with him; and the good-humour of the young courtier instantaneously returning, he again ran on in a grotesque and rodomontade account of the host, Monsieur de Beaujeu, which he did not conclude until they had reached the temple of hospitality over which that eminent professor presided.

CHAPTER XII

This is the very barn-yard,
Where muster daily the prime cocks o' the game,
Ruffle their pinions, crow till they are hoarse,
And spar about a barleycorn. Here too chickens,
The callow, unledged brood of forward folly,
Learn first to rear the crest, and aim the spur,
And tune their note like full-plumed chanticleer.

The Bear-Garden.

THE ordinary, now an ignoble sound, was, in the days of James, a new institution, as fashionable among the youth of that age as the first-rate modern club-houses are amongst those of the present day. It differed chiefly in being open to all whom good clothes and good assurance combined to introduce there. The company usually dined together at an hour fixed, and the manager of the establishment presided as master of the ceremonies.

Monsieur le Chevalier (as he qualified himself) St.-Priest de Beaujeu was a sharp, thin Gascon, about sixty years old, banished from his own country, as he said, on account of an affair of honour, in which he had the misfortune to kill his antagonist, though the best swordsman in the south of France. His pretensions to quality were supported by a feathered hat, a long rapier, and a suit of embroidered taffeta, not much the worse for wear, in the extreme fashion of the Parisian court, and fluttering like a Maypole with many knots of ribbon, of which it was computed he bore at least five hundred yards about his person. But, notwithstanding this profusion of decoration, there were many who thought Monsieur le Chevalier so admirably calculated for his present situation that nature could never have meant to place him an inch above it. It was, however, part of the amusement of the place for Lord Dalgarno and other young men of quality to treat Monsieur de Beaujeu with a great deal of mock ceremony, which being observed by the

herd of more ordinary and simple gulls, they paid him, in clumsy imitation, much real deference. The Gascon's natural forwardness being much enhanced by these circumstances, he was often guilty of presuming beyond the limits of his situation, and of course had sometimes the mortification to be disagreeably driven back into them.

When Nigel entered the mansion of this eminent person, which had been but of late the residence of a great baron of Queen Elizabeth's court, who had retired to his manors in the country on the death of that princess, he was surprised at the extent of the accommodation which it afforded, and the number of guests who were already assembled. Feathers waved, spurs jingled, lace and embroidery glanced everywhere; and, at first sight at least, it certainly made good Lord Dalgarno's encomium, who represented the company as composed almost entirely of youth of the first quality. A more close review was not quite so favourable. Several individuals might be discovered who were not exactly at their ease in the splendid dresses which they wore, and who, therefore, might be supposed not habitually familiar with such finery. Again, there were others whose dress, though on a general view it did not seem inferior to that of the rest of the company, displayed, on being observed more closely, some of those petty expedients by which vanity endeavours to disguise poverty.

Nigel had very little time to make such observations, for the entrance of Lord Dalgarno created an immediate bustle and sensation among the company, as his name passed from one mouth to another. Some stood forward to gaze, others stood back to make way; those of his own rank hastened to welcome him; those of inferior degree endeavoured to catch some point of his gesture, or of his dress, to be worn and practised upon a future occasion, as the newest and most authentic fashion.

The *genius loci*, the chevalier himself, was not the last to welcome this prime stay and ornament of his establishment. He came shuffling forward with a hundred apish congés and '*chers milors*,' to express his happiness at seeing Lord Dalgarno again. 'I hope you do bring back the sun with you, milor. You did carry away the sun and moon from your *pauvre* chevalier when you leave him for so long. Pardieu, I believe you take them away in your pockets.'

'That must have been because you left me nothing else in them, chevalier,' answered Lord Dalgarno; 'but, Monsieur le

Chevalier, I pray you to know my countryman and friend, Lord Glenvarloch.

'Ah, ha! très honoré. Je m'en souviens — oui. J'ai connu autrefois un Milor Kenfarloque en Ecosse. Yes, I have memory of him — le père de milor apparemment — we were vera intimate when I was at Oly Root with Monsieur de la Motte. I did often play at tennis vit Milor Kenfarloque at L'Abbaie d'Oly Root; il étoit même plus fort que moi. Ah le beau coup de revers qu'il avoit! I have memory, too, that he was among the pretty girls — ah, un vrai diable déchainé. Aha! I have memory —'

'Better have no more memory of the late Lord Glenvarloch,' said Lord Dalgarno, interrupting the chevalier without ceremony, who perceived that the encomium which he was about to pass on the deceased was likely to be as disagreeable to the son as it was totally undeserved by the father, who, far from being either a gamester or libertine, as the chevalier's reminiscences falsely represented him, was, on the contrary, strict and severe in his course of life, almost to the extent of rigour.

'You have the reason, milor,' answered the chevalier — 'you have the right. Qu'est ce que nous avons à faire avec le temps passé? The time passed did belong to our fathers — our ancêtres — very well, the time present is to us; they have their pretty tombs, with their memories and armorials, all in brass and marbre; we have the petits plats exquis, and the soupe-à-chevalier, which I will cause to mount up immediately.'

So saying, he made a pirouette on his heel, and put his attendants in motion to place dinner on the table. Dalgarno laughed, and, observing his young friend looked grave, said to him, in a tone of reproach, 'Why, what! you are not gull enough to be angry with such an ass as that?'

'I keep my anger, I trust, for better purposes,' said Lord Glenvarloch; 'but I confess I was moved to hear such a fellow mention my father's name; and you, too, who told me this was no gaming-house, talked to him of having left it with emptied pockets.'

'Pshaw, man!' said Lord Dalgarno, 'I spoke but according to the trick of the time; besides, a man must set a piece or two sometimes, or he would be held a cullionly niggard. But here comes dinner, and we will see whether you like the chevalier's good cheer better than his conversation.'

Dinner was announced accordingly, and the two friends, being seated in the most honourable station at the board, were

ceremoniously attended to by the chevalier, who did the honours of his table to them and to the other guests, and seasoned the whole with his agreeable conversation. The dinner was really excellent, in that piquant style of cookery which the French had already introduced, and which the home-bred young men of England, when they aspired to the rank of connoisseurs and persons of taste, were under the necessity of admiring. The wine was also of the first quality, and circulated in great variety and no less abundance. The conversation among so many young men was, of course, light, lively, and amusing; and Nigel, whose mind had been long depressed by anxiety and misfortune, naturally found himself at ease, and his spirits raised and animated.

Some of the company had real wit, and could use it both politely and to advantage; others were coxcombs, and were laughed at without discovering it; and, again, others were originals, who seemed to have no objection that the company should be amused with their folly instead of their wit. And almost all the rest who played any prominent part in the conversation had either the real tone of good society which belonged to the period, or the jargon which often passes current for it.

In short, the company and conversation was so agreeable, that Nigel's rigour was softened by it, even towards the master of ceremonies, and he listened with patience to various details which the Chevalier de Beaujeu, seeing, as he said, that milor's taste lay for the *curieux* and *l'utile*, chose to address to him in particular on the subject of cookery. To gratify, at the same time, the taste for antiquity, which he somehow supposed that his new guest possessed, he launched out in commendation of the great artists of former days, particularly one whom he had known in his youth, 'Maitre de cuisine to the Maréchal Strozzi — très bon gentilhomme pourtant,' who had maintained his master's table with twelve covers every day during the long and severe blockade of le petit Leyth, although he had nothing better to place on it than the quarter of a carrion-horse now and then, and the grass and weeds that grew on the ramparts. 'Despardieux c'étoit un homme superbe!' With one tistle-head and a nettle or two he could make a soupe for twenty guests; an haunch of a little puppy-dog made a rôti des plus excellens; but his coup de maitre was when the rendition — what you call the surrender — took place and appened; and then, dieu me damme, he made out of the hind quarter of one salted horse

forty-five couverts, that the English and Scottish officers and nobility, who had the honour to dine with Monseigneur upon the rendition, could not tell what the devil any one of them were made upon at all.¹

The good wine had by this time gone so merrily round, and had such genial effect on the guests, that those of the lower end of the table, who had hitherto been listeners, began, not greatly to their own credit or that of the ordinary, to make innovations.

'You speak of the siege of Leith,' said a tall, raw-boned man, with thick mustachios turned up with a military twist, a broad buff belt, a long rapier, and other outward symbols of the honoured profession which lives by killing other people — 'you talk of the siege of Leith, and I have seen the place — a pretty kind of a hamlet it is, with a plain wall or rampart, and a pigeon-house or so of a tower at every angle. Uds daggers and scabbards, if a leaguer of our days had been twenty-four hours, not to say so many months, before it, without carrying the place and all its cocklofts, one after another, by pure storm, they would have deserved no better grace than the provost-marshal gives when his noose is reeved.'

'Saar,' said the chevalier, 'Monsieur le Capitaine, I was not at the siege of the petit Leyth, and I know not what you say about the cockloft; but I will say for Monseigneur de Strozzi, that he understood the grande guerre, and was grand capitaine — plus grand — that is more great, it may be, than some of the capitaines of Angleterre, who do speak very loud — tenez, monsieur, car c'est à vous!'

'O, monsieur,' answered the swordsman, 'we know the Frenchman will fight well behind his barrier of stone, or when he is armed with back, breast, and pot.'

'Pot!' exclaimed the chevalier, 'what do you mean by pot — do you mean to insult me among my noble guests? Saar, I have done my duty as a pauvre gentilhomme under the Grand Henri Quatre, both at Courtrai and Yvry, and, ventre saint gris! we had neither pot nor marmite, but did always charge in our shirt.'

'Which refutes another base scandal,' said Lord Dalgarno, laughing, 'alleging that linen was scarce among the French gentlemen-at-arms.'

'Gentlemen out at arms and elbows both, you mean, my lord,' said the captain, from the bottom of the table. 'Craving

¹ See French Cookery. Note 21.

your lordship's pardon, I do know something of these same gens-d'armes.'

'We will spare your knowledge at present, captain, and save your modesty at the same time the trouble of telling us how that knowledge was acquired,' answered Lord Dalgarno, rather contemptuously.

'I need not speak of it, my lord,' said the man of war: 'the world knows it — all, perhaps, but the men of mohair — the poor sneaking citizens of London, who would see a man of valour eat his very hilts for hunger, ere they would draw a farthing from their long purses to relieve them. Oh, if a band of the honest fellows I have seen were once to come near that cuckoo's nest¹ of theirs!'

'A cuckoo's nest! and that said of the city of London!' said a gallant who sat on the opposite side of the table, and who, wearing a splendid and fashionable dress, seemed yet scarce at home in it. 'I will not brook to hear that repeated.'

'What!' said the soldier, bending a most terrific frown from a pair of broad black eyebrows, handling the hilt of his weapon with one hand, and twirling with the other his huge mustachios; 'will you quarrel for your city?'

'Ay, marry will I,' replied the other. 'I am a citizen, I care not who knows it; and he who shall speak a word in dispraise of the city is an ass and a peremptory gull; and I will break his pate, to teach him sense and manners.'

The company, who probably had their reasons for not valuing the captain's courage at the high rate which he himself put upon it, were much entertained at the manner in which the quarrel was taken up by the indignant citizen; and they exclaimed on all sides, 'Well rung, Bow Bell!' 'Well crowed, the cock of St. Paul's!' 'Sound a charge there, or the soldier will mistake his signals, and retreat when he should advance.'

'You mistake me, gentlemen,' said the captain, looking round with an air of dignity. 'I will but inquire whether this cavaliero citizen is of rank and degree fitted to measure swords with a man of action — for, conceive me, gentlemen, it is not with every one that I can match myself without loss of reputation — and in that case he shall soon hear from me honourably, by way of cartel.'

'You shall feel me most dishonourably in the way of cudgel,' said the citizen, starting up, and taking his sword, which he had laid in a corner. 'Follow me.'

¹ See Note 22.

'It is my right to name the place of combat, by all the rules of the sword,' said the captain; 'and I do nominate the Maze, in Tothill Fields, for place; two gentlemen, who shall be indifferent judges, for witnesses; and for time — let me say this day fortnight, at daybreak.'

'And I,' said the citizen, 'do nominate the bowling-alley behind the house for place, the present good company for witnesses, and for time the present moment.'

So saying, he cast on his beaver, struck the soldier across the shoulders with his sheathed sword, and ran downstairs. The captain showed no instant alacrity to follow him; yet at last, roused by the laugh and sneer around him, he assured the company that what he did he would do deliberately, and assuming his hat, which he put on with the air of Ancient Pistol, he descended the stairs to the place of combat, where his more prompt adversary was already stationed, with his sword unsheathed. Of the company, all of whom seemed highly delighted with the approaching fray, some ran to the windows which overlooked the bowling-alley, and others followed the combatants downstairs. Nigel could not help asking Dalgarno whether he would not interfere to prevent mischief.

'It would be a crime against the public interest,' answered his friend; 'there can no mischief happen between two such originals which will not be a positive benefit to society, and particularly to the chevalier's establishment, as he calls it. I have been as sick of that captain's buff belt and red doublet for this month past as e'er I was of aught; and now I hope this bold linendraper will cudgel the ass out of that filthy lion's hide. See, Nigel — see, the gallant citizen has ta'en his ground about a bowl's-cast forward, in the midst of the alley — the very model of a hog in armour. Behold how he prances with his manly foot, and brandishes his blade, much as if he were about to measure forth cambric with it. See, they bring on the reluctant soldado, and plant him opposite to his fiery antagonist, twelve paces still dividing them. Lo, the captain draws his tool, but, like a good general, looks over his shoulder to secure his retreat, in case the worse come on't. Behold the valiant shopkeeper stoops his head, confident, doubtless, in the civic helmet with which his spouse has fortified his skull. Why, this is the rarest of sport. By Heaven, he will run a tilt at him like a ram.'

It was even as Lord Dalgarno had anticipated; for the citizen, who seemed quite serious in his zeal for combat, per-

ceiving that the man of war did not advance towards him, rushed on him with as much good fortune as courage, beat down the captain's guard, and, pressing on, thrust, as it seemed, his sword clear through the body of his antagonist, who, with a deep groan, measured his length on the ground. A score of voices cried to the conqueror, as he stood fixed in astonishment at his own feat, 'Away — away with you ! fly — fly — fly by the back door ! get into the Whitefriars, or cross the water to the Bankside, while we keep off the mob and the constables.' And the conqueror, leaving his vanquished foeman on the ground, fled accordingly, with all speed.

'By Heaven,' said Lord Dalgarno, 'I could never have believed that the fellow would have stood to receive a thrust ; he has certainly been arrested by positive terror, and lost the use of his limbs. See, they are raising him.'

Stiff and stark seemed the corpse of the swordsman, as one or two of the guests raised him from the ground : but, when they began to open his waistcoat to search for the wound which nowhere existed, the man of war collected his scattered spirits ; and, conscious that the ordinary was no longer a stage on which to display his valour, took to his heels as fast as he could run, pursued by the laughter and shouts of the company.

'By my honour,' said Lord Dalgarno, 'he takes the same course with his conqueror. I trust in Heaven he will overtake him, and then the valiant citizen will suppose himself haunted by the ghost of him he has slain.'

'Despardieux, milor,' said the chevalier, 'if he had staid one moment, he should have had a torchon — what you call a dish-clout, pinned to him for a piece of shroud, to show he be de ghost of one grand fanfaron.'

'In the meanwhile,' said Lord Dalgarno, 'you will oblige us, Monsieur le Chevalier, as well as maintain your own honoured reputation, by letting your drawers receive the man-at-arms with a cudgel, in case he should venture to come this way again.'

'Ventre saint gris, milor,' said the chevalier, 'leave that to me. Begar, the maid shall throw the wash-sud upon the grand poltron !'

When they had laughed sufficiently at this ludicrous occurrence, the party began to divide themselves into little knots ; some took possession of the alley, late the scene of combat, and put the field to its proper use of a bowling-ground, and it soon resounded with all the terms of the game, as 'run, run — rub,

rub—hold bias, you infernal trundling timber!’ thus making good the saying, that three things are thrown away in a bowling-green, namely, time, money, and oaths.

In the house, many of the gentlemen betook themselves to cards or dice, and parties were formed at ombre, at basset, at glee, at primero, and other games then in fashion; while the dice were used at various games, both with and without the tables, as hazard, in-and-in, passage, and so forth. The play, however, did not appear to be extravagantly deep; it was certainly conducted with great decorum and fairness; nor did there appear anything to lead the young Scotsman in the least to doubt his companion’s assurance that the place was frequented by men of rank and quality, and that the recreations they adopted were conducted upon honourable principles.

Lord Dalgarno neither had proposed play to his friend nor joined in the amusement himself, but sauntered from one table to another, remarking the luck of the different players, as well as their capacity to avail themselves of it, and exchanging conversation with the highest and most respectable of the guests. At length, as if tired of what in modern phrase would have been termed lounging, he suddenly remembered that Burbage was to act Shakspeare’s *King Richard* at the Fortune that afternoon, and that he could not give a stranger in London, like Lord Glenvarloch, a higher entertainment than to carry him to that exhibition. ‘Unless, indeed,’ he added, in a whisper, ‘there is a paternal interdiction of the theatre as well as of the ordinary.’

‘I never heard my father speak of stage-plays,’ said Lord Glenvarloch, ‘for they are shows of a modern date, and unknown in Scotland. Yet, if what I have heard to their prejudice be true, I doubt much whether he would have approved of them.’

‘Approved of them!’ exclaimed Lord Dalgarno; ‘why, George Buchanan wrote tragedies, and his pupil, learned and wise as himself, goes to see them, so it is next door to treason to abstain; and the cleverest men in England write for the stage, and the prettiest women in London resort to the playhouses, and I have a brace of nags at the door which will carry us along the streets like wildfire, and the ride will digest our venison and ortolans, and dissipate the fumes of the wine, and so let’s to horse. God-den to you, gentlemen. God-den, Chevalier de la Fortune.’

Lord Dalgarno's grooms were in attendance with two horses, and the young men mounted, the proprietor upon a favourite barb, and Nigel upon a high-dressed jennet, scarce less beautiful. As they rode towards the theatre, Lord Dalgarno endeavoured to discover his friend's opinion of the company to which he had introduced him, and to combat the exceptions which he might suppose him to have taken. 'And wherefore lookest thou sad,' he said, 'my pensive neophyte? Sage son of the alma mater of Low-Dutch learning, what aileth thee? Is the leaf of the living world which we have turned over in company less fairly written than thou hadst been taught to expect? Be comforted, and pass over one little blot or two; thou wilt be doomed to read through many a page as black as infamy, with her sooty pinion, can make them. Remember, most immaculate Nigel, that we are in London, not Leyden; that we are studying life, not lore. Stand buff against the reproach of thine over-tender conscience, man, and when thou sumwest up, like a good arithmetician, the actions of the day, before you balance the account upon your pillow, tell the accusing spirit to his brimstone beard that, if thine ears have heard the clatter of the devil's bones, thy hand hath not trowled them; that if thine eye hath seen the brawling of two angry boys, thy blade hath not been bared in their fray.'

'Now, all this may be wise and witty,' replied Nigel; 'yet I own I cannot but think that your lordship, and other men of good quality with whom we dined, might have chosen a place of meeting free from the intrusion of bullies, and a better master of your ceremonial than yonder foreign adventurer.'

'All shall be amended, Sancte Nigelle, when thou shalt come forth a new Peter the Hermit, to preach a crusade against dicing, drabbing, and company-keeping. We will meet for dinner in St. Sepulchre's church; we will dine in the chancel, drink our flask in the vestry; the parson shall draw every cork, and the clerk say "amen" to every health. Come, man, cheer up, and get rid of this sour and unsocial humour. Credit me, that the Puritans who object to us the follies and the frailties incident to human nature have themselves the vices of absolute devils, privy malice and backbiting hypocrisy, and spiritual pride in all its presumption. There is much, too, in life which we must see, were it only to learn to shun it. Will Shakspeare, who lives after death, and who is presently to afford thee such pleasure as none but himself can confer, has described the gallant Falconbridge as calling that man

A bastard to the time
That doth not smack of observation ;

Which, though I will not practise to deceive,
Yet, to avoid deceit, I mean to learn.

But here we are at the door of the Fortune,¹ where we shall have matchless Will speaking for himself. Goblin, and you other lout, leave the horses to the grooms, and make way for us through the press.'

They dismounted, and the assiduous efforts of Lutin, elbowing, bullying, and proclaiming his master's name and title, made way through a crowd of murmuring citizens and clamorous apprentices to the door, where Lord Dalgarno speedily procured a brace of stools upon the stage for his companion and himself, where, seated among other gallants of the same class, they had an opportunity of displaying their fair dresses and fashionable manners, while they criticised the piece during its progress ; thus forming, at the same time, a conspicuous part of the spectacle and an important proportion of the audience.

Nigel Olifaunt was too eagerly and deeply absorbed in the interest of the scene to be capable of playing his part as became the place where he was seated. He felt all the magic of that sorcerer who had displayed, within the paltry circle of a wooden booth, the long wars of York and Lancaster, compelling the heroes of either line to stalk across the scene in language and fashion as they lived, as if the grave had given up the dead for the amusement and instruction of the living. Burbage,² esteemed the best Richard until Garrick arose, played the tyrant and usurper with such truth and liveliness that, when the battle of Bosworth seemed concluded by his death, the ideas of reality and deception were strongly contending in Lord Glenvarloch's imagination, and it required him to rouse himself from his reverie, so strange did the proposal at first sound, when his companion declared King Richard should sup with them at the Mermaid.

They were joined, at the same time, by a small party of the gentlemen with whom they had dined, which they recruited by inviting two or three of the most accomplished wits and poets, who seldom failed to attend the Fortune Theatre, and were even but too ready to conclude a day of amusement with a night of pleasure. Thither the whole party adjourned, and

¹ This theatre was situated near Playhouse Yard, Golden Lane (*Laing*).
² See Note 23.

betwixt fertile cups of sack, excited spirits, and the emulous wit of their lively companions, seemed to realise the joyous boast of one of Ben Jonson's contemporaries, when reminding the bard of

Those lyric feasts,
Where men such clusters had,
As made them nobly wild, not mad ;
While yet each verse of thine
Outdid the meat, outdid the frolic wine.

CHAPTER XIII

Let the proud salmon gorge the feather'd hook,
Then strike, and then you have him. He will wince ;
Spin out your line that it shall whistle from you
Some twenty yards or so, yet you shall have him.
Marry ! you must have patience. The stout rock
Which is his trust hath edges something sharp ;
And the deep pool hath ooze and sludge enough
To mar your fishing, 'less you are more careful.

Albion, or the Double Kings.

IT is seldom that a day of pleasure, upon review, seems altogether so exquisite as the partaker of the festivity may have felt it while passing over him. Nigel Olifaunt, at least, did not feel it so, and it required a visit from his new acquaintance Lord Dalgarno to reconcile him entirely to himself. But this visit took place early after breakfast, and his friend's discourse was prefaced with a question, 'How he liked the company of the preceding evening?'

'Why, excellently well,' said Lord Glenvarloch ; 'only I should have liked the wit better had it appeared to flow more freely. Every man's invention seemed on the stretch, and each extravagant simile seemed to set one half of your men of wit into a brown study to produce something which should out-herod it.'

'And wherefore not?' said Lord Dalgarno, 'or what are these fellows fit for, but to play the intellectual gladiators before us? He of them who declares himself recreant, should, d—n him, be restricted to muddy ale, and the patronage of the Waterman's Company. I promise you, that many a pretty fellow has been mortally wounded with a quibble or a car-witchet at the Mermaid, and sent from thence, in a pitiable estate, to Wit's hospital in the Vintry, where they languish to this day amongst fools and aldermen.'

'It may be so,' said Lord Nigel ; 'yet I could swear by my honour, that last night I seemed to be in company with more

than one man whose genius and learning ought either to have placed him higher in our company or to have withdrawn him altogether from a scene where, sooth to speak, his part seemed unworthily subordinate.'

'Now, out upon your tender conscience,' said Lord Dalgarno; 'and the fico for such outcasts of Parnassus! Why, these are the very leavings of that noble banquet of pickled herrings and Rhenish which lost London so many of her principal witmongers and bards of misrule. What would you have said had you seen Nash or Green, when you interest yourself about the poor mimes you supped with last night? Suffice it, they had their drench and their doze, and they drank and slept as much as may save them from any necessity of eating till evening, when, if they are industrious, they will find patrons or players to feed them.¹ For the rest of their wants, they can be at no loss for cold water while the New River head holds good; and your doublets of Parnassus are eternal in duration.'

'Virgil and Horace had more efficient patronage,' said Nigel.

'Ay,' replied his countryman, 'but these fellows are neither Virgil nor Horace; besides, we have other spirits of another sort, to whom I will introduce you on some early occasion. Our Swan of Avon hath sung his last; but we have stout old Ben, with as much learning and genius as ever prompted the treader of sock and buskin. It is not, however, of him I mean now to speak, but I come to pray you, of dear love, to row up with me as far as Richmond, where two or three of the gallants whom you saw yesterday mean to give music and syllabubs to a set of beauties, with some curious bright eyes among them—such, I promise you, as might win an astrologer from his worship of the galaxy. My sister leads the bevy to whom I desire to present you. She hath her admirers at court; and is regarded, though I might dispense with sounding her praise, as one of the beauties of the time.'

There was no refusing an engagement where the presence of the party invited, late so low in his own regard, was demanded by a lady of quality, one of the choice beauties of the time. Lord Glenvarloch accepted, as was inevitable, and spent a lively day among the gay and the fair. He was the gallant in attendance, for the day, upon his friend's sister, the beautiful Countess of Blackchester, who aimed at once at superiority in the realms of fashion, of power, and of wit.

¹ See Men of Wit and Talent. Note 24.

She was, indeed, considerably older than her brother, and had probably completed her six lustres; but the deficiency in extreme youth was more than atoned for in the most precise and curious accuracy in attire, an early acquaintance with every foreign mode, and a peculiar gift in adapting the knowledge which she acquired to her own particular features and complexion. At court, she knew as well as any lady in the circle the precise tone, moral, political, learned, or jocose, in which it was proper to answer the monarch, according to his prevailing humour; and was supposed to have been very active, by her personal interest, in procuring her husband a high situation, which the gouty old viscount could never have deserved by any merit of his own commonplace conduct and understanding.

It was far more easy for this lady than for her brother to reconcile so young a courtier as Lord Glenvarloch to the customs and habits of a sphere so new to him. In all civilised society, the females of distinguished rank and beauty give the tone to manners, and, through these, even to morals. Lady Blackchester had, besides, interest either in the court or over the court, for its source could not be well traced, which created friends, and overawed those who might have been disposed to play the part of enemies.

At one time, she was understood to be closely leagued with the Buckingham family, with whom her brother still maintained a great intimacy; and, although some coldness had taken place betwixt the countess and the Duchess of Buckingham, so that they were little seen together, and the former seemed considerably to have withdrawn herself into privacy, it was whispered that Lady Blackchester's interest with the great favourite was not diminished in consequence of her breach with his lady.

Our account of the private court intrigues of that period, and of the persons to whom they were entrusted, are not full enough to enable us to pronounce upon the various reports which arose out of the circumstances we have detailed. It is enough to say, that Lady Blackchester possessed great influence on the circle around her, both from her beauty, her abilities, and her reputed talents for court intrigue; and that Nigel Olifaunt was not long of experiencing its power, as he became a slave in some degree to that species of habit which carries so many men into a certain society at a certain hour, without expecting or receiving any particular degree of gratification, or even amusement.

His life for several weeks may be thus described. The ordinary was no bad introduction to the business of the day ; and the young lord quickly found that, if the society there was not always irreproachable, still it formed the most convenient and agreeable place of meeting with the fashionable parties with whom he visited Hyde Park, the theatres, and other places of public resort, or joined the gay and glittering circle which Lady Blackchester had assembled around her. Neither did he entertain the same scrupulous horror which led him originally even to hesitate entering into a place where gaming was permitted ; but, on the contrary, began to admit the idea that, as there could be no harm in beholding such recreation when only indulged in to a moderate degree, so, from a parity of reasoning, there could be no objection to joining in it, always under the same restrictions. But the young lord was a Scotsman, habituated to early reflection, and totally unaccustomed to any habit which inferred a careless risk or profuse waste of money. Profusion was not his natural vice, or one likely to be acquired in the course of his education ; and in all probability, while his father anticipated with noble horror the idea of his son approaching the gaming-table, he was more startled at the idea of his becoming a gaining than a losing adventurer. The second, according to his principles, had a termination, a sad one indeed, in the loss of temporal fortune ; the first quality went on increasing the evil which he dreaded, and perilled at once both body and soul.

However the old lord might ground his apprehension, it was so far verified by his son's conduct, that, from an observer of the various games of chance which he witnessed, he came, by degrees, by moderate hazards and small bets or wagers, to take a certain interest in them. Nor could it be denied that his rank and expectations entitled him to hazard a few pieces, for his game went no deeper, against persons who, from the readiness with which they staked their money, might be supposed well able to afford to lose it.

It chanced, or, perhaps, according to the common belief, his evil genius had so decreed, that Nigel's adventures were remarkably successful. He was temperate, cautious, cool-headed, had a strong memory and a ready power of calculation ; was, besides, of a daring and intrepid character, one upon whom no one that had looked even slightly, or spoken to though but hastily, would readily have ventured to practise anything approaching to trick, or which required to be supported by

intimidation. While Lord Glenvarloch chose to play, men played with him regularly, or, according to the phrase, upon the square; and, as he found his luck change, or wished to hazard his good fortune no farther, the more professed votaries of fortune who frequented the house of Monsieur le Chevalier de St.-Priest Beaujeu did not venture openly to express their displeasure at his rising a winner. But when this happened repeatedly, the gamblers murmured amongst themselves equally at the caution and the success of the young Scotsman; and he became far from being a popular character among their society.

It was no slight inducement to the continuance of this most evil habit, when it was once in some degree acquired, that it seemed to place Lord Glenvarloch, haughty as he naturally was, beyond the necessity of subjecting himself to farther pecuniary obligations, which his prolonged residence in London must otherwise have rendered necessary. He had to solicit from the ministers certain forms of office, which were to render his sign-manual effectually useful; and these, though they could not be denied, were delayed in such a manner as to lead Nigel to believe there was some secret opposition which occasioned the demur in his business. His own impulse was, to have appeared at court a second time, with the King's sign-manual in his pocket, and to have appealed to his Majesty himself, whether the delay of the public officers ought to render his royal generosity unavailing. But the Lord Huntinglen, that good old peer, who had so frankly interfered in his behalf on a former occasion, and whom he occasionally visited, greatly dissuaded him from a similar adventure, and exhorted him quietly to await the deliverance of the ministers, which should set him free from dancing attendance in London.

Lord Dalgarno joined his father in deterring his young friend from a second attendance at court, at least till he was reconciled with the Duke of Buckingham. 'A matter in which,' he said, addressing his father, 'I have offered my poor assistance, without being able to prevail on Lord Nigel to make any — not even the least — submission to the Duke of Buckingham.'

'By my faith, and I hold the laddie to be in the right on't, Malcolm!' answered the stout old Scots lord. 'What right hath Buckingham, or, to speak plainly, the son of Sir George Villiers, to expect homage and fealty from one more noble than himself by eight quarters? I heard him myself, on no reason that I could perceive, term Lord Nigel his enemy; and it will

never be by my counsel that the lad speaks soft word to him till he recalls the hard one.'

'That is precisely my advice to Lord Glenvarloch,' answered Lord Dalgarno; 'but then you will admit, my dear father, that it would be the risk of extremity for our friend to return into the presence, the duke being his enemy; better to leave it with me to take off the heat of the distemperature with which some pickthanks have persuaded the duke to regard our friend.'

'If thou canst persuade Buckingham of his error, Malcolm,' said his father, 'for once I will say there hath been kindness and honesty in court service. I have oft told your sister and yourself that in the general I esteem it as lightly as may be.'

'You need not doubt my doing [my best in Nigel's case,' answered Lord Dalgarno; 'but you must think, my dear father, I must needs use slower and gentler means than those by which you became a favourite twenty years ago.'

'By my faith, I am afraid thou wilt,' answered his father. 'I tell thee, Malcolm, I would sooner wish myself in the grave than doubt thine honesty or honour; yet somehow it hath chanced that honest, ready service hath not the same acceptance at court which it had in my younger time, and yet you rise there.'

'Oh, the time permits not your old-world service,' said Lord Dalgarno; 'we have now no daily insurrections, no nightly attempts at assassination, as were the fashion in the Scottish court. Your prompt and uncourteous sword-in-hand attendance on the sovereign is no longer necessary, and would be as unbecoming as your old-fashioned serving-men, with their badges, broadswords, and bucklers, would be at a court masque. Besides, father, loyal haste hath its inconveniences. I have heard, and from royal lips too, that when you struck your dagger into the traitor Ruthven, it was with such little consideration, that the point ran a quarter of an inch into the royal buttock. The King never talks of it but he rubs the injured part, and quotes his "*infandum . . . renovare dolorem*." But this comes of old fashions, and of wearing a long Liddesdale whinger instead of a poniard of Parma. Yet this, my dear father, you call prompt and valiant service. The King, I am told, could not sit upright for a fortnight, though all the cushions in Falkland were placed in his chair of state, and the Provost of Dunfermline's borrowed to the boot of all.'

'It is a lie,' said the old earl — 'a false lie, forge it who list! It is true I wore a dagger of service by my side, and not a

bodkin like yours, to pick one's teeth withal. And for prompt service — odds nouns ! it should be prompt to be useful, when kings are crying treason and murder with the screech of a half-throttled hen. But you young courtiers know nought of these matters, and are little better than the green geese they bring over from the Indies, whose only merit to their masters is to repeat their own words after them — a pack of mouthers, and flatterers, and ear-wigs. Well, I am old and unable to mend, else I would break all off, and hear the Tay once more flinging himself over the Campsie Linn.'

'But there is your dinner-bell, father,' said Lord Dalgarno, 'which, if the venison I sent you prove seasonable, is at least as sweet a sound.'

'Follow me, then, youngsters, if you list,' said the old earl ; and strode on from the alcove in which this conversation was held, towards the house, followed by the two young men.

In their private discourse, Lord Dalgarno had little trouble in dissuading Nigel from going immediately to court ; while, on the other hand, the offers he made him of a previous introduction to the Duke of Buckingham were received by Lord Glenvarloch with a positive and contemptuous refusal. His friend shrugged his shoulders, as one who claims the merit of having given to an obstinate friend the best counsel, and desires to be held free of the consequences of his pertinacity.

As for the father, his table indeed, and his best liquor, of which he was more profuse than necessary, were at the command of his young friend, as well as his best advice and assistance in the prosecution of his affairs. But Lord Hungtinglen's interest was more apparent than real ; and the credit he had acquired by his gallant defence of the King's person was so carelessly managed by himself, and so easily eluded by the favourites and ministers of the sovereign, that, except upon one or two occasions, when the King was in some measure taken by surprise, as in the case of Lord Glenvarloch, the royal bounty was never efficiently extended either to himself or to his friends.

'There never was a man,' said Lord Dalgarno, whose shrewder knowledge of the English court saw where his father's deficiency lay, 'that had it so perfectly in his power to have made his way to the pinnacle of fortune as my poor father. He had acquired a right to build up the staircase step by step, slowly and surely, letting every boon which he begged year after year become in its turn the resting-place for the next annual grant. But your fortunes shall not shipwreck upon the same coast, Nigel,' he

would conclude. 'If I have fewer means of influence than my father has, or rather had, till he threw them away for butts of sack, hawks, hounds, and such carrion, I can, far better than he, improve that which I possess; and that, my dear Nigel, is all engaged in your behalf. Do not be surprised or offended that you now see me less than formerly. The stag-hunting is commenced, and the Prince looks that I should attend him more frequently. I must also maintain my attendance on the Duke, that I may have an opportunity of pleading your cause when occasion shall permit.'

'I have no cause to plead before the Duke,' said Nigel, gravely; 'I have said so repeatedly.'

'Why, I meant the phrase no otherwise, thou churlish and suspicious disputant,' answered Dalgarno, 'than as I am now pleading the Duke's cause with thee. Surely I only mean to claim a share in our royal master's favourite benediction, *Beati pacifici*.'

Upon several occasions, Lord Glenvarloch's conversations, both with the old earl and his son, took a similar turn, and had a like conclusion. He sometimes felt as if, betwixt the one and the other, not to mention the more unseen and unboasted, but scarce less certain, influence of Lady Blackhester, his affair, simple as it had become, might have been somehow accelerated. But it was equally impossible to doubt the rough honesty of the father and the eager and officious friendship of Lord Dalgarno; nor was it easy to suppose that the countenance of the lady, by whom he was received with such distinction, would be wanting, could it be effectual in his service.

Nigel was further sensible of the truth of what Lord Dalgarno often pointed out, that the favourite being supposed to be his enemy, every petty officer through whose hands his affair must necessarily pass would desire to make a merit of throwing obstacles in his way, which he could only surmount by steadiness and patience, unless he preferred closing the breach, or, as Lord Dalgarno called it, making his peace with the Duke of Buckingham.

Nigel might, and doubtless would, have had recourse to the advice of his friend George Heriot upon this occasion, having found it so advantageous formerly; but the only time he saw him after their visit to court, he found the worthy citizen engaged in hasty preparation for a journey to Paris, upon business of great importance in the way of his profession, and by an especial commission from the court and the Duke of

Buckingham, which was likely to be attended with considerable profit. The good man smiled as he named the Duke of Buckingham. 'He had been,' he said, 'pretty sure that his disgrace in that quarter would not be of long duration.'

Lord Glenvarloch expressed himself rejoiced at their reconciliation, observing, that it had been a most painful reflection to him that Master Heriot should, in his behalf, have incurred the dislike, and perhaps exposed himself to the ill offices, of so powerful a favourite.

'My lord,' said Heriot, 'for your father's son I would do much; and yet truly, if I know myself, I would do as much, and risk as much, for the sake of justice, in the case of a much more insignificant person, as I have ventured for yours. But as we shall not meet for some time, I must commit to your own wisdom the farther prosecution of this matter.'

And thus they took a kind and affectionate leave of each other.

There were other changes in Lord Glenvarloch's situation which require to be noticed. His present occupations, and the habits of amusement which he had acquired, rendered his living so far in the city a considerable inconvenience. He may also have become a little ashamed of his cabin on Paul's Wharf, and desirous of being lodged somewhat more according to his quality. For this purpose he had hired a small apartment near the Temple. He was, nevertheless, almost sorry for what he had done, when he observed that his removal appeared to give some pain to John Christie, and a great deal to his cordial and officious landlady. The former, who was grave and saturnine in everything he did, only hoped that all had been to Lord Glenvarloch's mind, and that he had not left them on account of any unbeseeming negligence on their part. But the tear twinkled in Dame Nelly's eye, while she recounted the various improvements she had made in the apartment of express purpose to render it more convenient to his lordship.

'There was a great sea-chest,' she said, 'had been taken upstairs to the shopman's garret, though it left the poor lad scarce eighteen inches of opening to creep betwixt it and his bed; and Heaven knew — she did not — whether it could ever be brought down that narrow stair again. Then the turning the closet into an alcove had cost a matter of twenty round shillings; and to be sure, to any other lodger but his lordship the closet was more convenient. There was all the linen, too, which she had bought on purpose. But Heaven's will be done — she was resigned.'

Everybody likes marks of personal attachment; and Nigel, whose heart really smote him, as if in his rising fortunes he were disdaining the lowly accommodations and the civilities of the humble friends which had been but lately actual favours, failed not by every assurance in his power, and by as liberal payment as they could be prevailed upon to accept, to alleviate the soreness of their feelings at his departure; and a parting kiss from the fair lips of his hostess sealed his forgiveness.

Richie Moniplies lingered behind his master, to ask whether, in case of need, John Christie could help a canny Scotsman to a passage back to his own country; and receiving assurance of John's interest to that effect, he said, at parting, he would remind him of his promise soon. 'For,' said he, 'if my lord is not weary of this London life, I ken one that is, videlicet, mysell; and I am weel determined to see Arthur's Seat again ere I am many weeks older.'

CHAPTER XIV

Bingo, why, Bingo ! hey, boy — here, sir, here !
He 's gone and off, but he 'll be home before us ;
'T is the most wayward cur e'er mumbled bone,
Or dogg'd a master's footstep. Bingo loves me
Better than ever beggar loved his alms ;
Yet, when he takes such humour, you may coax
Sweet Mistress Fantasy, your worship's mistress,
Out of her sullen moods, as soon as Bingo.

The Dominie and his Dog.

RICHIE MONIPLIES was as good as his word. Two or three mornings after the young lord had possessed himself of his new lodgings, he appeared before Nigel, as he was preparing to dress, having left his pillow at an hour much later than had formerly been his custom.

As Nigel looked upon his attendant, he observed there was a gathering gloom upon his solemn features, which expressed either additional importance, or superadded discontent, or a portion of both.

'How now,' he said, 'what is the matter this morning, Richie, that you have made your face so like the grotesque mask on one of the spouts yonder ?' pointing to the Temple Church, of which Gothic building they had a view from the window.

Richie swivelled his head a little to the right, with as little alacrity as if he had the crick in his neck, and instantly resuming his posture, replied, 'Mask here, mask there, it were nae such matters that I have to speak anent.'

'And what matters have you to speak anent, then ?' said his master, whom circumstances had inured to tolerate a good deal of freedom from his attendant.

'My lord,' said Richie, and then stopped to cough and hem, as if what he had to say stuck somewhat in his throat.

'I guess the mystery,' said Nigel — 'you want a little money, Richie. Will five pieces serve the present turn ?'

'My lord,' said Richie, 'I may, it is like, want a trifle of

money; and I am glad at the same time and sorry that it is mair plenty with your lordship than formerly.'

'Glad and sorry, man!' said Lord Nigel; 'why, you are reading riddles to me, Richie.'

'My riddle will be briefly read,' said Richie: 'I come to crave of your lordship your commands for Scotland.'

'For Scotland! why, art thou mad, man?' said Nigel; 'canst thou not tarry to go down with me?'

'I could be of little service,' said Richie, 'since you purpose to hire another page and groom.'

'Why, thou jealous ass,' said the young lord, 'will not thy load of duty lie the lighter? Go, take thy breakfast, and drink thy ale double strong, to put such absurdities out of thy head. I could be angry with thee for thy folly, man, but I remember how thou hast stuck to me in adversity.'

'Adversity, my lord, should never have parted us,' said Richie; 'methinks, had the warst come to warst, I could have starved as gallantly as your lordship, or more so, being in some sort used to it; for, though I was bred at a flesher's stall, I have not through my life had a constant intimacy with collops.'

'Now, what is the meaning of all this trash?' said Nigel; 'or has it no other end than to provoke my patience? You know well enough that, had I twenty serving-men, I would hold the faithful follower that stood by me in my distress the most valued of them all. But it is totally out of reason to plague me with your solemn capriccios.'

'My lord,' said Richie, 'in declaring your trust in me, you have done what is honourable to yourself, if I may with humility say so much, and in no way undeserved on my side. Nevertheless, we must part.'

'Body of me, man, why?' said Lord Nigel; 'what reason can there be for it, if we are mutually satisfied?'

'My lord,' said Richie Moniplies, 'your lordship's occupations are such as I cannot own or countenance by my presence.'

'How now, sirrah!' said his master, angrily.

'Under favour, my lord,' replied his domestic, 'it is unequal dealing to be equally offended by my speech and by my silence. If you can hear with patience the grounds of my departure, it may be, for aught I know, the better for you here and hereafter; if not, let me have my license of departure in silence, and so no more about it.'

'Go to, sir!' said Nigel; 'speak out your mind, only remember to whom you speak it.'

Weel — weel, my lord, I speak it with humility (never did he look with more starched dignity than when he uttered word); but do you think this dicing and card-shuffling, and haunting of taverns and playhouses, suits your lordship, I am sure it does not suit me?’

‘Why, you are not turned precisian or Puritan, fool?’ said Lord Glenvarloch, laughing, though, betwixt resentment and shame, it cost him some trouble to do so.

‘My lord,’ replied the follower, ‘I ken the purport of your every. I am, it may be, a little of a precisian, and I wish to heaven I was mair worthy of the name; but let that be a passer-by. I have stretched the duties of a serving-man as far as my Northern conscience will permit. I can give my gude word to my master, or to my native country, when I am in a foreign land, even though I should leave downright truth a wee bit behind me. Ay, and I will take or give a slash with ony man that speaks to the derogation of either. But this chambering, dicing, and play-haunting is not my element — I cannot draw breath in it; and when I hear of your lordship winning the miller that some poor creature may full sairly miss — by my soul, if it wad serve your necessity, rather than you gained it from him, I wad tak a jump over the hedge with your lordship, and cry “Stand!” to the first grazier we met that was coming from Smithfield with the price of his Essex calves in his leathern pouch!’

‘You are a simpleton,’ said Nigel, who felt, however, much conscience-struck; ‘I never play but for small sums.’

‘Ay, my lord,’ replied the unyielding domestic, ‘and — still with reverence — it is even sae much the waur. If you played with your equals, there might be like sin, but there wad be mair warldly honour in it. Your lordship kens, or may ken by experience of your ain, whilk is not as yet mony weeks auld, that small sums can ill be missed by those that have nane larger; and I maun e’en be plain with you, that men notice it of your lordship, that ye play wi’ nane but the misguided creatures that can but afford to lose bare stakes.’

‘No man dare say so!’ replied Nigel, very angrily. ‘I play with whom I please, but I will only play for what stake I please.’

‘That is just what they say, my lord,’ said the unmerciful Richie, whose natural love of lecturing, as well as his bluntness of feeling, prevented him from having any idea of the pain which he was inflicting on his master — ‘these are even their own very

words. It was but yesterday your lordship was pleased at that same ordinary to win from yonder young hafflins gentleman with the crimson velvet doublet and the cock's feather in his beaver — him, I mean, who fought with the ranting captain — a matter of five pounds, or thereby. I saw him come through the hall; and, if he was not cleaned out of cross and pile, I never saw a ruined man in my life.'

'Impossible!' said Lord Glenvarloch. 'Why, who is he? He looked like a man of substance.'

'All is not gold that glistens, my lord,' replied Richie; 'broidery and bullion buttons make bare pouches. And if you ask who he is — maybe I have a guess, and care not to tell.'

'At least, if I have done any such fellow an injury,' said the Lord Nigel, 'let me know how I can repair it.'

'Never fash your beard about that, my lord — with reverence always,' said Richie; 'he shall be suitably cared after. Think on him but as ane wha was running post to the devil, and got a shouldering from your lordship to help him on his journey. But I will stop him, if reason can; and so your lordship needs ask nae mair about it, for there is no use in your knowing it, but much the contrair.'

'Hark you, sirrah,' said his master, 'I have borne with you thus far for certain reasons, but abuse my good-nature no farther; and since you must needs go, why, go a God's name, and here is to pay your journey.' So saying, he put gold into his hand, which Richie told over, piece by piece, with the utmost accuracy.

'Is it all right — or are they wanting in weight — or what the devil keeps you; when your hurry was so great five minutes since?' said the young lord, now thoroughly nettled at the presumptuous precision with which Richie dealt forth his canons of morality.

'The tale of coin is complete,' said Richie, with the most imperturbable gravity; 'and, for the weight, though they are sae scrupulous in this town as make mouths at a piece that is a wee bit light, or that has been cracked within the ring, my sooth, they will jump at them in Edinburgh like a cock at a grosart. Gold pieces are not so plenty there, the mair the pity!'

'The more is your folly, then,' said Nigel, whose anger was only momentary, 'that leave the land where there is enough of them.'

'My lord,' said Richie, 'to be round with you, the grace of

God is better than gold pieces. When Goblin, as you call yonder Monsieur Lutin — and you might as well call him Gibbet, since that is what he is like to end in — shall recommend a page to you, ye will hear little such doctrine as ye have heard from me. And if they were my last words,' he said, raising his voice, 'I would say you are misled; and are forsaking the paths which your honourable father trode in; and, what is more, you are going — still under correction — to the devil with a dishelout, for you are laughed at by them that lead you into these disordered bye-paths.'

'Laughed at!' said Nigel, who, like others of his age, was more sensible to ridicule than to reason. 'Who dares laugh at me?'

'My lord, as sure as I live by bread — nay, more, as I am a true man — and, I think, your lordship never found Richie's tongue bearing aught but the truth — unless that your lordship's credit, my country's profit, or, it may be, some sma' occasion of my ain, made it unnecessary to promulgate the hail veritie — I say then, as I am a true man, when I saw that puir creature come through the ha', at that ordinary, whilk is accurst — Heaven forgive me for swearing! — of God and man, with his teeth set, and his hands clenched, and his bonnet drawn over his brows like a desperate man, Goblin said to me, "There goes a dung-hill chicken, that your master has plucked clean enough; it will be long ere his lordship ruffle a feather with a cock of the game." And so, my lord, to speak it out, the lackeys and the gallants, and more especially your sworn brother, Lord Dalgarno, call you the sparrow-hawk. I had some thought to have cracked Lutin's pate for the speech, but, after a', the controversy was not worth it.'

'Do they use such terms of me?' said Lord Nigel. 'Death and the devil!'

'And the devil's dam, my lord,' answered Richie; 'they are all three busy in London. And, besides, Lutin and his master laughed at you, my lord, for letting it be thought that — I shame to speak it — that ye were over well with the wife of the decent honest man whose house you have but now left, as not sufficient for your new bravery, whereas they said, the licentious scoffers, that you pretended to such favour when you had not courage enough for so fair a quarrel, and that the sparrow-hawk was too craven-crested to fly at the wife of a cheesemonger.' He stopped a moment, and looked fixedly in his master's face, which was inflamed with shame and anger, and then proceeded. 'My lord,

I did you justice in my thought, and myself too. "For," thought I, "he would have been as deep in that sort of profligacy as in others, if it hadna been Richie's four quarters."

'What new nonsense have you got to plague me with?' said Lord Nigel. 'But go on, since it is the last time I am to be tormented with your impertinence — go on, and make the most of your time.'

'In troth,' said Richie, 'and so will I even do. And as Heaven has bestowed on me a tongue to speak and to advise —'

'Which talent you can by no means be accused of suffering to remain idle,' said Lord Glenvarloch, interrupting him.

'True, my lord,' said Richie, again waving his hand, as if to bespeak his master's silence and attention; 'so, I trust, you will think some time hereafter. And, as I am about to leave your service, it is proper that ye suld know the truth, that ye may consider the snares to which your youth and innocence may be exposed, when aulder and doucer heads are withdrawn from beside you. There has been a lusty, good-looking kimmer, of some forty or bygane, making mony speerings about you, my lord.'

'Well, sir, what did she want with me?' said Lord Nigel.

'At first, my lord,' replied his sapient follower, 'as she seemed to be a well-fashioned woman, and to take pleasure in sensible company, I was no way reluctant to admit her to my conversation.'

'I daresay not,' said Lord Nigel; 'nor unwilling to tell her about my private affairs.'

'Not I, truly, my lord,' said the attendant; 'for, though she asked me mony questions about your fame, your fortune, your business here, and such-like, I did not think it proper to tell her altogether the truth thereanent.'

'I see no call on you whatever,' said Lord Nigel, 'to tell the woman either truth or lies upon what she had nothing to do with.'

'I thought so too, my lord,' replied Richie, 'and so I told her neither.'

'And what *did* you tell her, then, you eternal babbler?' said his master, impatient of his prate, yet curious to know what it was all to end in.

'I told her,' said Richie, 'about your warldly fortune and sae forth, something whilk is not truth just at this time; but which hath been truth formerly, suld be truth now, and will be

truth again — and that was, that you were in possession of your fair lands, whilk ye are but in right of as yet. Pleasant communing we had on that and other topics, until she showed the cloven foot, beginning to confer with me about some wench that she said had a good-will to your lordship, and fain she would have spoken with you in particular anent it; but when I heard of such inklings, I began to suspect she was little better than — whew!’ Here he concluded his narrative with a low but very expressive whistle.

‘And what did your wisdom do in these circumstances?’ said Lord Nigel, who, notwithstanding his former resentment, could now scarcely forbear laughing.

‘I put on a look, my lord,’ replied Richie, bending his solemn brows, ‘that suld give her a heart-scald of walking on such errands. I laid her enormities clearly before her, and I threatened her, in sae many words, that I would have her to the ducking-stool; and she, on the contrair part, miscawed me for a froward Northern tyke; and so we parted never to meet again, as I hope and trust. And so I stood between your lordship and that temptation, which might have been worse than the ordinary or the playhouse either; since you wot well what Solomon, king of the Jews, sayeth of the strange woman. “For,” said I to mysell, “we have taken, to dicing already, and if we take to drabbing next, the Lord kens what we may land in!”’

‘Your impertinence deserves correction, but it is the last which, for a time at least, I shall have to forgive, and I forgive it,’ said Lord Glenvarloch; ‘and, since we are to part, Richie, I will say no more respecting your precautions on my account than that I think you might have left me to act according to my own judgment.’

‘Mickle better not,’ answered Richie — ‘mickle better not; we are a’ frail creatures, and can judge better for ilk ither than in our ain cases. And for me, even myself, saving that case of the siffication, which might have happened to ony one, I have always observed myself to be much more prudential in what I have done in your lordship’s behalf than even in what I have been able to transact for my own interest — whilk last I have, indeed, always postponed, as in duty I ought.’

‘I do believe thou hast,’ said Lord Nigel, ‘having ever found thee true and faithful. And since London pleases you so little, I will bid you a short farewell; and you may go down to Edin-

burgh until I come thither myself, when I trust you will re-enter into my service.'

'Now, Heaven bless you, my lord,' said Richie Moniplies, with uplifted eyes; 'for that word sounds more like grace than ony has come out of your mouth this fortnight. I give you god-den, my lord.'

So saying, he thrust forth his immense bony hand, seized on that of Lord Glenvarloch, raised it to his lips, then turned short on his heel, and left the room hastily, as if afraid of showing more emotion than was consistent with his ideas of decorum. Lord Nigel, rather surprised at his sudden exit, called after him to know whether he was sufficiently provided with money; but Richie, shaking his head, without making any other answer, ran hastily downstairs, shut the street-door heavily behind him, and was presently seen striding along the Strand.

His master almost involuntarily watched and distinguished the tall, raw-boned figure of his late follower from the window for some time, until he was lost among the crowd of passengers. Nigel's reflections were not altogether those of self-approval. It was no good sign of his course of life, he could not help acknowledging this much to himself, that so faithful an adherent no longer seemed to feel the same pride in his service, or attachment to his person, which he had formerly manifested. Neither could he avoid experiencing some twinges of conscience, while he felt in some degree the charges which Richie had preferred against him, and experienced a sense of shame and mortification, arising from the colour given by others to that which he himself would have called his caution and moderation in play. He had only the apology that it had never occurred to himself in this light.

Then his pride and self-love suggested that, on the other hand, Richie, with all his good intentions, was little better than a conceited, pragmatistical domestic, who seemed disposed rather to play the tutor than the lackey, and who, out of sheer love, as he alleged, to his master's person, assumed the privilege of interfering with, and controlling, his actions, besides rendering him ridiculous in the gay world from the antiquated formality and intrusive presumption of his manners.

Nigel's eyes were scarce turned from the window, when his new landlord, entering, presented to him a slip of paper, carefully bound round with a string of floss-silk and sealed. 'It had been given in,' he said, 'by a woman, who did not stop an instant.'

The contents harped upon the same string which Richie Moniples had already jarred. The epistle was in the following words :—

‘For the Right Honourable hands of Lord Glenvarloch,

'These, from a friend unknown :—

‘MY LORD,

‘You are trusting to an dishonest friend, and diminishing an honest reputation. An unknown but real friend of your lordship will speak in one word what you would not learn from flatterers in so many days as should suffice for your utter ruin. He whom you think most true — I say your friend, Lord Dalgarno — is utterly false to you, and doth but seek, under pretence of friendship, to mar your fortune, and diminish the good name by which you might mend it. The kind countenance which he shows to you is more dangerous than the Prince’s frown; even as to gain at Beaujeu’s ordinary is more discreditable than to lose. Beware of both. And this is all from your true but nameless friend, Ignoro.’

Lord Glenvarloch paused for an instant, and crushed the paper together — then again unfolded and read it with attention — bent his brows — mused for a moment, and then tearing it to fragments, exclaimed — ‘Begone for a vile calumny! But I will watch — I will observe —’

Thought after thought rushed on him ; but, upon the whole, Lord Glenvarloch was so little satisfied with the result of his own reflections, that he resolved to dissipate them by a walk in the Park, and, taking his cloak and beaver, went thither accordingly.

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his hat drawn over his eyes, he was suddenly pounced upon by Sir Mungo Malagrowth, who, either shunning or shunned, had retreated, or had been obliged to retreat, to the same less frequented corner of the Park.

Nigel started when he heard the high, sharp, and querulous tones of the knight's cracked voice, and was no less alarmed when he beheld his tall thin figure hobbling towards him, wrapped in a threadbare cloak, on whose surface ten thousand varied stains eclipsed the original scarlet, and having his head surmounted with a well-worn beaver, bearing a black velvet band for a chain, and a capon's feather for an ostrich plume.

Lord Glenvarloch would fain have made his escape, but, as our motto intimates, a leveret had as little chance to free herself of an experienced greyhound. Sir Mungo, to continue the simile, had long ago learned to 'run cunning,' and make sure of mousing his game. So Nigel found himself compelled to stand and answer the hackneyed question — 'What news to-day?'

'Nothing extraordinary, I believe,' answered the young nobleman, attempting to pass on.

'Oh, ye are gauging to the French ordinary belive,' replied the knight; 'but it is early day yet. We will take a turn in the Park in the meanwhile; it will sharpen your appetite.'

So saying, he quietly slipped his arm under Lord Glenvarloch's, in spite of all the decent reluctance which his victim could exhibit, by keeping his elbow close to his side; and having fairly grappled the prize, he proceeded to take it in tow.

Nigel was sullen and silent, in hopes to shake off his unpleasant companion; but Sir Mungo was determined that, if he did not speak, he should at least hear.

'Ye are bound for the ordinary, my lord?' said the cynic; 'weel, ye canna do better: there is choice company there, and peculiarly selected, as I am tauld, being, dootless, sic as it is desirable that young noblemen should herd withal; and your noble father wad have been blithe to see you keeping such worshipful society.'

'I believe,' said Lord Glenvarloch, thinking himself obliged to say something, 'that the society is as good as generally can be found in such places, where the door can scarcely be shut against those who come to spend their money.'

'Right, my lord — vera right,' said his tormentor, bursting out into a chuckling, but most discordant, laugh. 'These citizen chuffs and clowns will press in amongst us, when there is but an inch of a door open. And what remedy? Just e'en

CHAPTER XV

'T was when fleet Snowball's head was woxen grey,
A luckless lev'ret met him on his way.
Who knows not Snowball — he, whose race renown'd
Is still victorious on each coursing-ground ?
Swaffham, Newmarket, and the Roman Camp,
Have seen them victors o'er each meaner stamp.
In vain the youngling sought, with doubling wile,
The hedge, the hill, the thicket, or the stile.
Experience sage the lack of speed supplied,
And in the gap he sought, the victim died.
So was I once, in thy fair street, St. James,
Through walking cavaliers and car-borne dame
Descried, pursued, turn'd o'er again, and o'er,
Coursed, coted, mouth'd by an unfeeling bore.
Etc. etc. etc.

THE Park of St. James's, though enlarged, planted with verdant alleys, and otherwise decorated by Charles II., existed in the days of his grandfather as a public and pleasant promenade ; and, for the sake of exercise or pastime, was much frequented by the better class.

Lord Glenvarloch repaired thither to dispel the unpleasant reflections which had been suggested by his parting with his trusty squire, Richie Moniplies, in a manner which was agreeable neither to his pride nor his feelings ; and by the corroboration which the hints of his late attendant had received from the anonymous letter mentioned in the end of the last chapter.

There was a considerable number of company in the Park when he entered it, but, his present state of mind inducing him to avoid society, he kept aloof from the more frequented walks towards Westminster and Whitehall, and drew to the north, or, as we should now say, the Piccadilly verge of the inclosure, believing he might there enjoy, or rather combat, his own thoughts unmolested.

In this, however, Lord Glenvarloch was mistaken ; for, as he strolled slowly along with his arms folded in his cloak, and

old tormentor from his arm. But an instant's recollection convinced him that to do either would only give an air of truth and consistency to the scandals which he began to see were affecting his character, both in the higher and lower circles. Hastily, therefore, he formed the wiser resolution to endure Sir Mungo's studied impertinence, under the hope of ascertaining, if possible, from what source those reports arose which were so prejudicial to his reputation.

Sir Mungo, in the meanwhile, caught up, as usual, Nigel's last words, or rather the sound of them, and amplified and interpreted them in his own way. 'Tolerable luck!' he repeated; 'yes, truly, my lord, I am told that you *have* tolerable luck, and that ye ken weel how to use that jilting quean, Dame Fortune, like a canny douce lad, willing to warm yourself in her smiles, without exposing yourself to her frowns. And that is what I ca' having luck in a bag.'

'Sir Mungo Malagrowth, said Lord Glenvarloch, turning towards him seriously, 'have the goodness to hear me for a moment.'

'As weel as I can, my lord—as weel as I can,' said Sir Mungo, shaking his head, and pointing the finger of his left hand to his ear.

'I will try to speak very distinctly,' said Nigel, arming himself with patience. 'You take me for a noted gamester; I give you my word that you have not been rightly informed—I am none such. You owe me some explanation, at least, respecting the source from which you have derived such false information.'

'I never heard ye were a *great* gamester, and never thought or said ye were such, my lord,' said Sir Mungo, who found it impossible to avoid hearing what Nigel said with peculiarly deliberate and distinct pronunciation. 'I repeat it—I never heard, said, or thought that you were a ruffling gamester, such as they call those of the first head. Look you, my lord, I call *him* a gamester that plays with equal stakes and equal skill, and stands by the fortune of the game, good or bad; and I call *him* a ruffling gamester, or ane of the first head, who ventures frankly and deeply upon such a wager. But he, my lord, who has the patience and prudence never to venture beyond small game, such as, at most, might crack the Christmas-box of a grocer's 'prentice, who vies with those that have little to hazard, and who therefore, having the larger stock, can always rook them by waiting for his good fortune, and by rising from the game when luck leaves him—such a one as he, my lord, I do

is, that as their cash gies them confidence, we should strip them of it. Flay them, my lord — singe them as the kitchen French does the rats, and then they winna long to come back again. Ay — ay, pluck them, plume them ; and then the larded apons will not be for flying so high a wing, my lord, among the cross-hawks and sparrow-hawks, and the like.'

And therewithal Sir Mungo fixed on Nigel his quick, sharp, grey eye, watching the effect of his sarcasm as keenly as the surgeon, in a delicate operation, remarks the progress of his anatomical scalpel.

Nigel, however willing to conceal his sensations, could not avoid gratifying his tormentor by wincing under the operation. He coloured with vexation and anger ; but a quarrel with Sir Mungo Malagrowth would, he felt, be unutterably ridiculous ; and he only muttered to himself the words, 'Impertinent coxcomb !' which, on this occasion, Sir Mungo's imperfection of organ did not prevent him from hearing and replying to.

'Ay — ay, vera true,' exclaimed the caustic old courtier. Impertinent coxcombs they are, that thus intrude themselves on the society of their betters ; but your lordship kens how to gar them as gude — ye have the trick on 't. They had a braw sport in the presence last Friday, how ye suld have routed a young shopkeeper, horse and foot, ta'en his *spolia opima*, and a' the specie he had about him, down to the very silver buttons of his cloak, and sent him to graze with Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. Muckle honour redounded to your lordship thereby. We were tauld the loon threw himsell into the Thames in a fit of desperation. There's enow of them behind — there was mair tint on Flodden Edge.'

'You have been told a budget of lies, so far as I am concerned, Sir Mungo,' said Nigel, speaking loud and sternly.

'Vera likely — vera likely,' said the unabashed and undismayed Sir Mungo ; 'naething but lies are current in the circle. So the chield is not drowned, then ? — the mair's the pity. But I never believed that part of the story ; a London dealer has mair wit in his anger. I dare swear the lad has a bonny broom-shank in his hand by this time, and is scrubbing the kennels in quest after rusty nails, to help him to begin his pack again. He has three bairns, they say ; they will help him bravely to grope in the gutters. Your good lordship may have the ruining of him again, my lord, if they have any luck in strand-scouring.'

'This is more than intolerable,' said Nigel, uncertain whether, to make an angry vindication of his character or to fling the

cares whether the fat bulls of Bashan can spare it or no? gentlemen are not to limit their sport for the like of them.'

'I wish to know, Sir Mungo,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'in what company you have learned these offensive particulars respecting me?'

'Dootless — dootless, my lord,' said Sir Mungo; 'I have ever heard, and have ever reported, that your lordship kept the best of company in a private way. There is the fine Countess of Blackchester, but I think she stirs not much abroad since her affair with his Grace of Buckingham; and there is the gude auld-fashioned Scottish nobleman, Lord Huntinglen, an undeniable man of quality — it is pity but he could keep caup and can frae his head, whilk now and then doth 'minish his reputation; and there is the gay young Lord Dalgarno, that carries the craft of grey hairs under his curled love-locks. A fair race they are, father, daughter, and son, all of the same honourable family. I think we needna speak of George Heriot, honest man, when we have nobility in question. So that is the company I have heard of your keeping, my lord, out-taken those of the ordinary.'

'My company has not, indeed, been much more extended than amongst those you mention,' said Lord Glenvarloch; 'but in short —'

'To court?' said Sir Mungo, 'that was just what I was going to say. Lord Dalgarno says he cannot prevail on ye to come to court, and that does ye prejudice, my lord. The King hears of you by others, when he should see you in person. I speak in serious friendship, my lord. His Majesty, when you were named in the circle short while since, was heard to say, "*Jacta est alea!*" Glenvarlochides is turned dicer and drinker." My Lord Dalgarno took your part, and he was e'en borne down by the popular voice of the courtiers, who spoke of you as one who had betaken yourself to living a town life, and risking your baron's coronet amongst the flatcaps of the city.'

'And this was publicly spoken of me,' said Nigel, 'and in the King's presence?'

'Spoken openly!' repeated Sir Mungo Malagrowther; 'ay, by my troth was it; that is to say, it was whispered privately, whilk is as open promulgation as the thing permitted; for ye may think the court is not like a place where men are as sib as Simmie and his brother, and roar out their minds as if they were at an ordinary.'

not call a *great gamester*, to whatever other name he may be entitled.'

'And such a mean-spirited, sordid wretch you would infer that I am,' replied Lord Glenvarloch — 'one who fears the skilful, and preys upon the ignorant; who avoids playing with his equals, that he may make sure of pillaging his inferiors? Is this what I am to understand has been reported of me?'

'Nay, my lord, you will gain nought by speaking big with me,' said Sir Mungo, who, besides that his sarcastic humour was really supported by a good fund of animal courage, had also full reliance on the immunities which he had derived from the broadsword of Sir Rullion Rattray and the baton of the satellites employed by the Lady Cockpen. 'And for the truth of the matter,' he continued, 'your lordship best knows whether you ever lost more than five pieces at a time since you frequented Beaujeu's; whether you have not most commonly risen a winner; and whether the brave young gallants who frequent the ordinary — I mean those of noble rank and means conforming — are in use to play upon these terms?'

'My father was right,' said Lord Glenvarloch, in the bitterness of his spirit; 'and his curse justly followed me when I first entered that place. There is contamination in the air, and he whose fortune avoids ruin shall be blighted in his honour and reputation.'

Sir Mungo, who watched his victim with the delighted yet wary eye of an experienced angler, became now aware that, if he strained the line on him too tightly, there was every risk of his breaking hold. In order to give him room, therefore, to play, he protested that Lord Glenvarloch 'should not take his free speech *in malam partem*. If you were a trifle over sicker in your amusement, my lord, it canna be denied that it is the safest course to prevent farther endangerment of your somewhat dilapidated fortunes; and if ye play with your inferiors, ye are relieved of the pain of pouching the siller of your friends and equals; forbye, that the plebeian knaves have had the advantage, *tecum certasse*, as Ajax Telamon sayeth, *apud Metamorphoseos*; and for the like of them to have played with ane Scottish nobleman is an honest and honourable consideration to compensate the loss of their stake, whilk, I daresay, moreover, maist of the churls can weel afford.'

'Be that as it may, Sir Mungo,' said Nigel, 'I would fain know —'

'Ay — ay,' interrupted Sir Mungo; 'and, as you say, who

rank of Prince of Wales. After about a minute's conversation, the Prince bestowed on Nigel the embarrassing notice of another fixed look, touched his hat slightly to Sir Mungo, and walked on.

'It is even as I suspected, my lord,' said Sir Mungo, with an air which he designed to be melancholy and sympathetic, but which, in fact, resembled the grin of an ape when he has mouthed a scalding chestnut. 'Ye have back-friends, my lord, that is unfriends — or, to be plain, enemies — about the person of the Prince.'

'I am sorry to hear it,' said Nigel; 'but I would I knew what they accuse me of.'

'Ye shall hear, my lord,' said Sir Mungo, 'the Prince's vera words. "Sir Mungo," said he, "I rejoice to see you, and am glad your rheumatic troubles permit you to come hither for exercise." I bowed, as in duty bound; ye might remark, my lord, that I did so, whilk formed the first branch of our conversation. His Highness then demanded of me, "If he with whom I stood was the young Lord Glenvarloch." I answered, "that you were such, for his Highness's service"; whilk was the second branch. Thirdly, his Highness, resuming the argument, said, that "truly he had been told so" — meaning that he had been told you were that personage — "but that he could not believe that the heir of that noble and decayed house could be leading an idle, scandalous, and precarious life in the eating-houses and taverns of London, while the King's drums were beating and colours flying in Germany in the cause of the Palatine, his son-in-law." I could, your lordship is aware, do nothing but make an obeisance; and a gracious "Give ye good day, Sir Mungo Malagrowth, " licensed me to fall back to your lordship. And now, my lord, if your business or pleasure calls you to the ordinary, or anywhere in the direction of the city — why, have with you; for, dootless, ye will think ye have tarried lang enough in the Park, as they will likely turn at the head of the walk, and return this way; and you have a broad hint, I think, not to cross the Prince's presence in a hurry.'

'You may stay or go as you please, Sir Mungo,' said Nigel, with an expression of calm but deep resentment; 'but, for my own part, my resolution is taken. I will quit this public walk for pleasure of no man; still less will I quit it like one unworthy to be seen in places of public resort. I trust that the Prince and his retinue will return this way as you expect; for I will abide, Sir Mungo, and beard them.'

both of James and Charles, and had no difficulty in so conducting himself as to maintain the highest post in the favour of both. It has indeed been supposed, as we before hinted, that the duke, when he had completely possessed himself of the affections of Charles, retained his hold in those of the father only by the tyranny of custom; and that James, could he have brought himself to form a vigorous resolution, was, in the latter years of his life especially, not unlikely to have discarded Buckingham from his counsels and favour. But if ever the King indeed meditated such a change, he was too timid, and too much accustomed to the influence which the duke had long exercised over him, to summon up resolution enough for effecting such a purpose; and at all events it is certain that Buckingham, though surviving the master by whom he was raised, had the rare chance to experience no wane of the most splendid court favour during two reigns, until it was at once eclipsed in his blood by the dagger of his assassin Felton.

To return from this digression: The Prince, with his train, advanced, and were near the place where Lord Glenvarloch and Sir Mungo had stood aside, according to form, in order to give the Prince passage and to pay the usual marks of respect. Nigel could now remark that Lord Dalgarno walked close behind the Duke of Buckingham, and, as he thought, whispered something in his ear as they came onward. At any rate, both the Prince's and Duke of Buckingham's attention seemed to be directed by some circumstance towards Nigel, for they turned their heads in that direction and looked at him attentively—the Prince with a countenance the grave, melancholy expression of which was blended with severity, while Buckingham's looks evinced some degree of scornful triumph. Lord Dalgarno did not seem to observe his friend, perhaps because the sunbeams fell from the side of the walk on which Nigel stood, obliging Malcolm to hold up his hat to screen his eyes.

As the Prince passed, Lord Glenvarloch and Sir Mungo bowed, as respect required; and the Prince, returning their obeisance with that grave ceremony which paid to every rank its due, but not a tittle beyond it, signed to Sir Mungo to come forward. Commencing an apology for his lameness as he started, which he had just completed as his hobbling gait brought him up to the Prince, Sir Mungo lent an attentive, and, as it seemed, an intelligent, ear to questions asked in a tone so low that the knight would certainly have been deaf to them had they been put to him by any one under the

limped away ; often looking back, however, as if his natural spirit, even in its present subdued state, aided by his love of contradiction and of debate, rendered him unwilling to adopt the course necessary for his own security.

Thus abandoned by his companion, whose departure he graced with better thoughts of him than those which he bestowed on his appearance, Nigel remained with his arms folded, and reclining against a solitary tree which overhung the path, making up his mind to encounter a moment which he expected to be critical of his fate. But he was mistaken in supposing that the Prince of Wales would either address him or admit him to expostulation in such a public place as the Park. He did not remain unnoticed, however, for, when he made a respectful but haughty obeisance, intimating in look and manner that he was possessed of, and undaunted by, the unfavourable opinion which the Prince had so lately expressed, Charles returned his reverence with such a frown as is only given by those whose frown is authority and decision. The train passed on, the Duke of Buckingham not even appearing to see Lord Glenvarloch ; while Lord Dalgarno, though no longer incommoded by the sunbeams, kept his eyes, which had perhaps been dazzled by their former splendour, bent upon the ground.

Lord Glenvarloch had difficulty to restrain an indignation to which, in the circumstances, it would have been madness to have given vent. He started from his reclining posture, and followed the Prince's train so as to keep them distinctly in sight ; which was very easy, as they walked slowly. Nigel observed them keep their road towards the palace, where the Prince turned at the gate and bowed to the noblemen in attendance, in token of dismissing them, and entered the palace, accompanied only by the Duke of Buckingham and one or two of his equerries. The rest of the train, having returned in all dutiful humility the farewell of the Prince, began to disperse themselves through the Park.

All this was carefully noticed by Lord Glenvarloch, who, as he adjusted his cloak and drew his sword-belt round so as to bring the hilt closer to his hand, muttered — 'Dalgarno shall explain all this to me, for it is evident that he is in the secret !'

'Beard them !' exclaimed Sir Mungo, in the extremity of surprise — 'beard the Prince of Wales, the heir-apparent of the kingdoms ! By may saul, you shall beard him yoursell then.'

Accordingly, he was about to leave Nigel very hastily, when some unwonted touch of good-natured interest in his youth and inexperience seemed suddenly to soften his habitual cynicism.

'The devil is in me for an auld fule !' said Sir Mungo ; 'but I must needs concern mysell — I, that owe so little either to fortune or my fellow-creatures, must, I say, needs concern mysell — with this springald, whom I will warrant to be as obstinate as a pig possessed with a devil, for it's the cast of his family ; and yet I maun e'en fling away some sound advice on him. My dainty young Lord Glenvarloch, understand me distinctly, for this is no bairn's-play. When the Prince said sae much to me as I have repeated to you, it was equivalent to a command not to appear again in his presence ; wherefore, take an auld man's advice that wishes you weel, and maybe a wee thing better than he has reason to wish ony body. Jouk and let the jaw gae by, like a canny bairn ; gang hame to your lodgings, keep your foot frae taverns and your fingers frae the dice-box ; compound your affairs quietly wi' some ane that has better favour than yours about court, and you will get a round spell of money to carry you to Germany, or elsewhere, to push your fortune. It was a fortunate soldier that made your family four or five hundred years syne, and if you are brave and fortunate, you may find the way to repair it. But, take my word for it, that in this court you will never thrive.'

When Sir Mungo had completed his exhortation, in which there was more of sincere sympathy with another's situation than he had been heretofore known to express in behalf of any one, Lord Glenvarloch replied, 'I am obliged to you, Sir Mungo ; you have spoken, I think, with sincerity, and I thank you. But, in return for your good advice, I heartily entreat you to leave me ; I observe the Prince and his train are returning down the walk, and you may prejudice yourself, but cannot help me, by remaining with me.'

'And that is true,' said Sir Mungo ; 'yet, were I ten years younger, I would be tempted to stand by you, and gie them the meeting. But at threescore and upward men's courage turns cauldrie ; and they that canna win a living must not endanger the small sustenance of their age. I wish you weel through, my lord, but it is an unequal fight.' So saying, he turned and

much lately. Away with this folly, man ; go, dine upon soup and salad, drink succory-water to cool your blood, go to bed at sundown, and defy those foul fiends, wrath and misconstruction.'

'I have had misconstruction enough among you,' said Glenvarloch, in the same tone of determined displeasure, 'and from you, my Lord Dalgarno, in particular, and all under the mask of friendship.'

'Here is a proper business !' said Dalgarno, turning as if to appeal to Sir Ewes Haldimund. 'Do you see this angry ruffler, Sir Ewes ? A month since, he dared not have looked one of yonder sheep in the face, and now he is a prince of roisterers, a plucker of pigeons, a controller of players and poets ; and in gratitude for my having shown him the way to the eminent character which he holds upon town, he comes hither to quarrel with his best friend, if not his only one of decent station.'

'I renounce such hollow friendship, my lord,' said Lord Glenvarloch ; 'I disclaim the character which, even to my very face, you labour to fix upon me, and ere we part I will call you to a reckoning for it.'

'My lords both,' interrupted Sir Ewes Haldimund, 'let me remind you that the royal park is no place to quarrel in.'

'I will make my quarrel good,' said Nigel, who did not know, or in his passion might not have recollected, the privileges of the place, 'wherever I find my enemy.'

'You shall find quarrelling enough,' replied Lord Dalgarno, calmly, 'so soon as you assign a sufficient cause for it. Sir Ewes Haldimund, who knows the court, will warrant you that I am not backward on such occasions. But of what is it that you now complain, after having experienced nothing save kindness from me and my family ?'

'Of your family I complain not,' replied Lord Glenvarloch ; 'they have done for me all they could, — more, far more, than I could have expected ; but you, my lord, have suffered me, while you called me your friend, to be traduced, where a word of your mouth would have placed my character in its true colours ; and hence the injurious message which I just now received from the Prince of Wales. To permit the misrepresentation of a friend, my lord, is to share in the slander.'

'You have been misinformed, my Lord Glenvarloch,' said Sir Ewes Haldimund : 'I have myself often heard Lord Dalgarno defend your character, and regret that your exclusive attach-

CHAPTER XVI

Give way — give way ; I must and will have justice.
And tell me not of privilege and place ;
Where I am injured, there I 'll sue redress.
Look to it, every one who bars my access ;
I have a heart to feel the injury,
A hand to right myself, and, by my honour
That hand shall grasp what grey-beard Law denies me.

The Chamberlain.

IT was not long ere Nigel discovered Lord Dalgarno advancing towards him in the company of another young man of quality of the Prince's train ; and as they directed their course towards the south-eastern corner of the Park, he concluded they were about to go to Lord Huntinglen's. They stopped, however, and turned up another path leading to the north ; and Lord Glenvarloch conceived that this change of direction was owing to their having seen him, and their desire to avoid him.

Nigel followed them without hesitation by a path which, winding around a thicket of shrubs and trees, once more conducted him to the less frequented part of the Park. He observed which side of the thicket was taken by Lord Dalgarno and his companion, and he himself, walking hastily round the other verge, was thus enabled to meet them face to face.

'Good-morow, my Lord Dalgarno,' said Lord Glenvarloch, sternly.

'Ha ! my friend Nigel,' answered Lord Dalgarno, in his usual careless and indifferent tone — 'my friend Nigel, with business on his brow ? But you must wait till we meet at Beaujeu's at noon : Sir Ewes Haldimund and I are at present engaged in the Prince's service.'

'If you were engaged in the King's, my lord,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'you must stand and answer me.'

'Hey-day !' said Lord Dalgarno, with an air of great astonishment, 'what passion is this ? Why, Nigel, this is King Cambyases' vein ! You have frequented the theatres too

much lately. Away with this folly, man; go, dine upon soup and salad, drink succory-water to cool your blood, go to bed at sundown, and defy those foul fiends, wrath and misconception.'

'I have had misconception enough among you,' said Glenvarloch, in the same tone of determined displeasure, 'and from you, my Lord Dalgarno, in particular, and all under the mask of friendship.'

'Here is a proper business!' said Dalgarno, turning as if to appeal to Sir Ewes Haldimund. 'Do you see this angry ruffler, Sir Ewes? A month since, he dared not have looked one of yonder sheep in the face, and now he is a prince of roisterers, a plucker of pigeons, a controller of players and poets; and in gratitude for my having shown him the way to the eminent character which he holds upon town, he comes hither to quarrel with his best friend, if not his only one of decent station.'

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'You have been misinformed, my Lord Glenvarloch,' said Sir Ewes Haldimund: 'I have myself often heard Lord Dalgarno defend your character, and regret that your exclusive attach-

ment to the pleasures of a London life prevented your paying your duty regularly to the King and Prince.'

'While he himself,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'dissuaded me from presenting myself at court.'

'I will cut this matter short,' said Lord Dalgarno, with haughty coldness. 'You seem to have conceived, my lord, that you and I were Pylades and Orestes — a second edition of Damon and Pythias — Theseus and Pirithoüs at the least. You are mistaken, and have given the name of friendship to what, on my part, was mere good-nature and compassion for a raw and ignorant countryman, joined to the cumbersome charge which my father gave me respecting you. Your character, my lord, is of no one's drawing, but of your own making. I introduced you where, as in all such places, there was good and indifferent company to be met with; your habits, or taste, made you prefer the worse. Your holy horror at the sight of dice and cards degenerated into the cautious resolution to play only at those times, and with such persons, as might ensure your rising a winner; no man can long do so, and continue to be held a gentleman. Such is the reputation you have made for yourself, and you have no right to be angry that I do not contradict in society what yourself know to be true. Let us pass on, my lord; and if you want further explanation, seek some other time and fitter place.'

'No time can be better than the present,' said Lord Glenvarloch, whose resentment was now excited to the uttermost by the cold-blooded and insulting manner in which Dalgarno vindicated himself, 'no place fitter than the place where we now stand. Those of my house have ever avenged insult at the moment, and on the spot where it was offered, were it at the foot of the throne. Lord Dalgarno, you are a villain! draw and defend yourself.' At the same time he unsheathed his rapier.

'Are you mad?' said Lord Dalgarno, stepping back; 'we are in the precincts of the court.'

'The better,' answered Lord Glenvarloch; 'I will cleanse them from a calumniator and a coward.' He then pressed on Lord Dalgarno, and struck him with the flat of the sword.

The fray had now attracted attention, and the cry went round, 'Keep the peace — keep the peace — swords drawn in the Park! What, ho! guards! — keepers — yeomen rangers!' and a number of people came rushing to the spot from all sides.

Lord Dalgarno, who had half drawn his sword on receiving the blow, returned it to its scabbard when he observed the

crowd thicken, and, taking Sir Ewes Haldimund by the arm, walked hastily away, only saying to Lord Glenvarloch as they left him, 'You shall dearly abye this insult — we will meet again.'

A decent-looking elderly man, who observed that Lord Glenvarloch remained on the spot, taking compassion on his youthful appearance, said to him, 'Are you aware this is a Star Chamber business, young gentleman, and that it may cost you your right hand? Shift for yourself before the keepers or constables come up. Get into Whitefriars or somewhere, for sanctuary and concealment, till you can make friends or quit the city.'

The advice was not to be neglected. Lord Glenvarloch made hastily towards the issue from the Park by St. James's Palace, then St. James's Hospital. The hubbub increased behind him; and several peace-officers of the royal household came up to apprehend the delinquent. Fortunately for Nigel, a popular edition of the cause of the affray had gone abroad. It was said that one of the Duke of Buckingham's companions had insulted a stranger gentleman from the country, and that the stranger had cudgelled him soundly. A favourite, or the companion of a favourite, is always odious to John Bull, who has, besides, a partiality to those disputants who proceed, as lawyers term it, *par voye du fait*, and both prejudices were in Nigel's favour. The officers, therefore, who came to apprehend him could learn from the spectators no particulars of his appearance, or information concerning the road he had taken; so that, for the moment, he escaped being arrested.

What Lord Glenvarloch heard among the crowd as he passed along was sufficient to satisfy him that, in his impatient passion, he had placed himself in a predicament of considerable danger. He was no stranger to the severe and arbitrary proceedings of the Court of Star Chamber, especially in cases of breach of privilege, which made it the terror of all men; and it was no farther back than the Queen's time that the punishment of mutilation had been actually awarded and executed for some offence of the same kind which he had just committed. He had also the comfortable reflection that, by his violent quarrel with Lord Dalgarno, he must now forfeit the friendship and good offices of that nobleman's father and sister, almost the only persons of consideration in whom he could claim any interest; while all the evil reports which had been put in circulation concerning his character were certain to weigh heavily against him, in a case where much must necessarily depend on the reputation of the accused. To a youthful imagination, the idea of such a

punishment as mutilation seems more ghastly than death itself; and every word which he overheard among the groups which he met, mingled with, or overtook and passed, announced this as the penalty of his offence. He dreaded to increase his pace for fear of attracting suspicion, and more than once saw the ranger's officers so near him, that his wrist tingled as if already under the blade of the dismembering knife. At length he got out of the Park, and had a little more leisure to consider what he was next to do.

Whitefriars, adjacent to the Temple, then well known by the cant name of *Alsatia*, had at this time, and for nearly a century afterwards, the privilege of a sanctuary, unless against the writ of the Lord Chief Justice or of the lords of the privy council. Indeed, as the place abounded with desperadoes of every description — bankrupt citizens, ruined gamblers, irreclaimable prodigals, desperate duellists, bravoës, homicides, and debauched profligates of every description, all leagued together to maintain the immunities of their asylum — it was both difficult and unsafe for the officers of the law to execute warrants emanating even from the highest authority, amongst men whose safety was inconsistent with warrants or authority of any kind. This Lord Glenvarloch well knew; and odious as the place of refuge was, it seemed the only one where, for a space at least, he might be concealed and secure from the immediate grasp of the law, until he should have leisure to provide better for his safety, or to get this unpleasant matter in some shape accommodated.

Meanwhile, as Nigel walked hastily forward towards the place of sanctuary, he bitterly blamed himself for suffering Lord Dalgarno to lead him into the haunts of dissipation; and no less accused his intemperate heat of passion, which now had driven him for refuge into the purlieus of profane and avowed vice and debauchery.

'Dalgarno spoke but too truly in that,' were his bitter reflections; 'I have made myself an evil reputation by acting on his insidious counsels, and neglecting the wholesome admonitions which ought to have claimed implicit obedience from me, and which recommended abstinence even from the slightest approach to evil. But if I escape from the perilous labyrinth in which folly and inexperience, as well as violent passions, have involved me, I will find some noble way of redeeming the lustre of a name which was never sullied until I bore it.'

As Lord Glenvarloch formed these prudent resolutions, he entered the Temple Walks, whence a gate at that time opened

into Whitefriars, by which, as by the more private passage, he proposed to betake himself to the sanctuary. As he approached the entrance to that den of infamy, from which his mind recoiled even while in the act of taking shelter there, his pace slackened, while the steep and broken stairs reminded him of the *facilis descensus Averni*, and rendered him doubtful whether it were not better to brave the worst which could befall him in the public haunts of honourable men than to evade punishment by secluding himself in those of avowed vice and profligacy.

As Nigel hesitated, a young gentleman of the Temple advanced towards him, whom he had often seen, and sometimes conversed with, at the ordinary, where he was a frequent and welcome guest, being a wild young gallant, indifferently well provided with money, who spent at the theatres and other gay places of public resort the time which his father supposed he was employing in the study of the law. But Reginald Lowestoffe, such was the young Templar's name, was of opinion that little law was necessary to enable him to spend the revenues of the paternal acres which were to devolve upon him at his father's demise, and therefore gave himself no trouble to acquire more of that science than might be imbibed along with the learned air of the region in which he had his chambers. In other respects he was one of the wits of the place, read Ovid and Martial, aimed at quick repartee and pun (often very far fetched), danced, fenced, played at tennis, and performed sundry tunes on the fiddle and French horn, to the great annoyance of old Counsellor Barratter, who lived in the chambers immediately below him. Such was Reginald Lowestoffe, shrewd, alert, and well acquainted with the town through all its recesses, but in a sort of disreputable way. This gallant, now approaching the Lord Glenvarloch, saluted him by name and title, and asked if his lordship designed for the Chevalier's this day, observing, it was near noon, and the woodcock would be on the board ere they could reach the ordinary.

'I do not go there to-day,' answered Lord Glenvarloch.

'Which way, then, my lord?' said the young Templar, who was perhaps not undesirous to parade a part at least of the street in company with a lord, though but a Scottish one.

'I—I'—said Nigel, desiring to avail himself of this young man's local knowledge; yet unwilling and ashamed to acknowledge his intention to take refuge in so disreputable a quarter, or to describe the situation in which he stood—'I have some curiosity to see Whitefriars.'

'What! your lordship is for a frolic into Alsatia?' said Lowestoffe. 'Have with you, my lord; you cannot have a better guide to the infernal regions than myself. I promise you there are bona-robas to be found there—good wine too, ay, and good fellows to drink it with, though somewhat suffering under the frowns of Fortune. But your lordship will pardon me; you are the last of our acquaintance to whom I would have proposed such a voyage of discovery.'

'I am obliged to you, Master Lowestoffe, for the good opinion you have expressed in the observation,' said Lord Glenvarloch; 'but my present circumstances may render even a residence of a day or two in the sanctuary a matter of necessity.'

'Indeed!' said Lowestoffe, in a tone of great surprise; 'I thought your lordship had always taken care not to risk any considerable stake. I beg pardon, but if the bones have proved perfidious, I know just so much law as that a peer's person is sacred from arrest; and for mere impecuniosity, my lord, better shift can be made elsewhere than in Whitefriars, where all are devouring each other for very poverty.'

'My misfortune has no connexion with want of money,' said Nigel.

'Why, then, I suppose,' said Lowestoffe, 'you have been tilting, my lord, and have pinked your man; in which case, and with a purse reasonably furnished, you may lie perdu in Whitefriars for a twelvemonth. Marry, but you must be entered and received as a member of their worshipful society, my lord, and a frank burgher of Alsatia; so far you must condescend, there will be neither peace nor safety for you else.'

'My fault is not in a degree so deadly, Master Lowestoffe,' answered Lord Glenvarloch, 'as you seem to conjecture; I have stricken a gentleman in the Park, that is all.'

'By my hand, my lord, and you had better have struck your sword through him at Barns Elms,' said the Templar. 'Strike within the verge of the court! You will find that a weighty dependence upon your hands, especially if your party be of rank and have favour.'

'I will be plain with you, Master Lowestoffe,' said Nigel, 'since I have gone thus far. The person whom I struck was Lord Dalgarno, whom you have seen at Beaujeu's.'

'A follower and favourite of the Duke of Buckingham! It is a most unhappy chance, my lord; but my heart was formed in England, and cannot bear to see a young nobleman borne down, as you are like to be. We converse here greatly too

open for your circumstances. The Templars would suffer no bailiff to execute a writ, and no gentleman to be arrested for a duel, within their precincts ; but in such a matter between Lord Dalgarno and your lordship there might be a party on either side. You must away with me instantly to my poor chambers here, hard by, and undergo some little change of dress ere you take sanctuary, for else you will have the whole rascal rout of the Friars about you, like crows upon a falcon that strays into their rookery. We must have you arrayed something more like the natives of Alsatia, or there will be no life there for you.'

While Lowestoffe spoke, he pulled Lord Glenvarloch along with him into his chambers, where he had a handsome library, filled with all the poems and play-books which were then in fashion. The Templar then despatched a boy, who waited upon him, to procure a dish or two from the next cook's shop. 'And this,' he said, 'must be your lordship's dinner, with a glass of old sack, of which my grandmother—the Heavens requite her!—sent me a dozen bottles, with charge to use the liquor only with clarified whey, when I felt my breast ache with over-study. Marry, we will drink the good lady's health in it, if it is your lordship's pleasure, and you shall see how we poor students eke out our mutton-commons in the hall.'

The outward door of the chambers was barred so soon as the boy had re-entered with the food ; the boy was ordered to keep close watch, and admit no one ; and Lowestoffe, by example and precept, pressed his noble guest to partake of his hospitality. His frank and forward manners, though much differing from the courtly ease of Lord Dalgarno, were calculated to make a favourable impression ; and Lord Glenvarloch, though his experience of Dalgarno's perfidy had taught him to be cautious of reposing faith in friendly professions, could not avoid testifying his gratitude to the young Templar, who seemed so anxious for his safety and accommodation.

'You may spare your gratitude any great sense of obligation, my lord,' said the Templar. 'No doubt I am willing to be of use to any gentleman that has cause to sing "Fortune my foe," and particularly proud to serve your lordship's turn ; but I have also an old grudge, to speak Heaven's truth, at your opposite, Lord Dalgarno.'

'May I ask upon what account, Master Lowestoffe ?' said Lord Glenvarloch.

'Oh, my lord,' replied the Templar, 'it was for a hap that chanced after you left the ordinary, one evening about three

weeks since — at least I think you were not by, as your lordship always left us before deep play began — I mean no offence, but such was your lordship's custom — when there were words between Lord Dalgarno and me concerning a certain game at gleek, and a certain mournival of aces held by his lordship, which went for eight — tib, which went for fifteen — twenty-three in all. Now, I held king and queen, being three — a natural towser, making fifteen — and tiddy, nineteen. We vied the ruff, and revied, as your lordship may suppose, till the stake was equal to half my yearly exhibition — fifty as fair yellow canary birds as e'er chirped in the bottom of a green silk purse. Well, my lord, I gained the cards, and lo you ! it pleases his lordship to say that we played without tiddy ; and as the rest stood by and backed him, and especially the sharking Frenchman, why, I was obliged to lose more than I shall gain all the season. So judge if I have not a crow to pluck with his lordship. Was it ever heard there was a game at gleek at the ordinary before without counting tiddy ? Marry guep upon his lordship ! Every man who comes there with his purse in his hand is as free to make new laws as he, I hope, since touch pot touch penny makes every man equal.'

As Master Lowestoffe ran over this jargon of the gaming-table, Lord Glenvarloch was both ashamed and mortified ; and felt a severe pang of aristocratic pride when he concluded in the sweeping clause that the dice, like the grave, levelled those distinguishing points of society to which Nigel's early prejudices clung perhaps but too fondly. It was impossible, however, to object anything to the learned reasoning of the young Templar, and therefore Nigel was contented to turn the conversation by making some inquiries respecting the present state of Whitefriars. There also his host was at home.

'You know, my lord,' said Master Lowestoffe, 'that we Templars are a power and a dominion within ourselves ; and I am proud to say that I hold some rank in our republic — was treasurer to the Lord of Misrule last year, and am at this present moment in nomination for that dignity myself. In such circumstances, we are under the necessity of maintaining an amicable intercourse with our neighbours of Alsatia ; even as the Christian states find themselves often, in mere policy, obliged to make alliance with the Grand Turk or the Barbary states.'

'I should have imagined you gentlemen of the Temple more independent of your neighbours,' said Glenvarloch.

'You do us something too much honour, my lord,' said the Templar ; 'the Alsatians and we have some common enemies,

and we have, under the rose, some common friends. We are in the use of blocking all bailiffs out of our bounds, and we are powerfully aided by our neighbours, who tolerate not a rag belonging to them within theirs. Moreover, the Alsations have — I beg you to understand me — the power of protecting or distressing our friends, male or female, who may be obliged to seek sanctuary within their bounds. In short, the two communities serve each other, though the league is between states of unequal quality, and I may myself say that I have treated of sundry weighty affairs, and have been a negotiator well approved on both sides. But hark — hark, what is that ?

The sound by which Master Lowestoffe was interrupted was that of a distant horn, winded loud and keenly, and followed by a faint and remote huzza.

‘There is something doing,’ said Lowestoffe, ‘in the Whitefriars at this moment. That is the signal when their privileges are invaded by tipstaff or bailiff ; and at the blast of the horn they all swarm out to the rescue, as bees when their hive is disturbed. Jump, Jim,’ he said, calling out to the attendant, ‘and see what they are doing in Alsatia. That bastard of a boy,’ he continued, as the lad, accustomed to the precipitate haste of his master, tumbled rather than ran out of the apartment, and so downstairs, ‘is worth gold in this quarter : he serves six masters, four of them in distinct numbers, and you would think him present like a fairy at the mere wish of him that for the time most needs his attendance. No scout in Oxford, no gip in Cambridge, ever matched him in speed and intelligence. He knows the step of a dun from that of a client when it reaches the very bottom of the staircase ; can tell the trip of a pretty wench from the step of a benchman when at the upper end of the court ; and is, take him all in all — But I see your lordship is anxious. May I press another cup of my kind grandmother’s cordial, or will you allow me to show you my wardrobe, and act as your valet or groom of the chamber ?’

Lord Glenvarloch hesitated not to acknowledge that he was painfully sensible of his present situation, and anxious to do what must needs be done for his extrication.

The good-natured and thoughtless young Templar readily acquiesced, and led the way into his little bedroom, where, from bandboxes, portmanteaus, mail-trunks, not forgetting an old walnut-tree wardrobe, he began to select the articles which he thought more suited effectually to disguise his guest in venturing into the lawless and turbulent society of Alsatia.

CHAPTER XVII

Come hither, young one. Mark me ! Thou art now
'Mongst men o' the sword, that live by reputation
More than by constant income. Single-suited
They are, I grant you ; yet each single suit
Maintains, on the rough guess, a thousand followers ;
And they be men, who, hazarding their all,
Needful apparel, necessary income,
And human body, and immortal soul,
Do in the very deed but hazard nothing ;
So strictly is that ALL bound in reversion —
Clothes to the broker, income to the usurer,
And body to disease, and soul to the foul fiend,
Who laughs to see soldadoes and fooladoes
Play better than himself his game on earth.

The Mohocks.

'YOUR lordship,' said Reginald Lowestoffe, 'must be content to exchange your decent and court-beseeming rapier, which I will retain in safe keeping, for this broadsword, with an hundred-weight of rusty iron about the hilt, and to wear these huge-paned slops instead of your civil and moderate hose. We allow no cloak, for your ruffian always walks *in cuervo* ; and the tarnished doublet of bald velvet, with its discoloured embroidery, and — I grieve to speak it — a few stains from the blood of the grape, will best suit the garb of a roaring boy. I will leave you to change your suit for an instant, till I can help to truss you.'

Lowestoffe retired, while slowly and with hesitation Nigel obeyed his instructions. He felt displeasure and disgust at the scoundrelly disguise which he was under the necessity of assuming ; but when he considered the bloody consequences which law attached to his rash act of violence, the easy and indifferent temper of James, the prejudices of his son, the overbearing influence of the Duke of Buckingham, which was sure to be thrown into the scale against him ; and, above all, when he reflected that he must now look upon the active, assiduous, and

insinuating Lord Dalgarno as a bitter enemy, reason told him, he was in a situation of peril which authorised all honest means, even the most unseemly in outward appearance, to extricate himself from so dangerous a predicament.

While he was changing his dress, and musing on these particulars, his friendly host re-entered the sleeping-apartment. 'Zounds!' he said, 'my lord, it was well you went not straight into that same Alsatia of ours at the time you proposed, for the hawks have stooped upon it. Here is Jim come back with tidings that he saw a pursuivant there with a privy council warrant, and half a score of yeomen assistants armed to the teeth, and the horn which we heard was sounded to call out the posse of the Friars. Indeed, when old Duke Hildebrod saw that the quest was after some one of whom he knew nothing, he permitted, out of courtesy, the man-catcher to search through his dominions, quite certain that they would take little by their motions; for Duke Hildebrod is a most judicious potentate. Go back, you bastard, and bring us word when all is quiet.'

'And who may Duke Hildebrod be?' said Lord Glenvarloch.

'Nouns! my lord,' said the Templar, 'have you lived so long on the town and never heard of the valiant, and as wise and politic as valiant, Duke Hildebrod, grand protector of the liberties of Alsatia? I thought the man had never whirled a die but was familiar with his fame.'

'Yet I have never heard of him, Master Lowestoffe,' said Lord Glenvarloch; 'or, what is the same thing, I have paid no attention to aught that may have passed in conversation respecting him.'

'Why, then,' said Lowestoffe — 'but, first, let me have the honour of trussing you. Now, observe, I have left several of the points untied of set purpose; and if it please you to let a small portion of your shirt be seen betwixt your doublet and the band of your upper stock, it will have so much the more rakish effect, and will attract you respect in Alsatia, where linen is something scarce. Now, I tie some of the points carefully asquint, for your ruffianly gallant never appears too accurately trussed — so.'

'Arrange it as you will, sir,' said Nigel; 'but let me hear at least something of the conditions of the unhappy district into which, with other wretches, I am compelled to retreat.'

'Why, my lord,' replied the Templar, 'our neighbouring state of Alsatia, which the law calls the sanctuary of Whitefriars, has had its mutations and revolutions like greater king-

doms ; and being in some sort a lawless, arbitrary government, it follows, of course, that these have been more frequent than our own better regulated commonwealth of the Templars, that of Gray's Inn, and other similar associations, have had the fortune to witness. Our traditions and records speak of twenty revolutions within the last twelve years, in which the aforesaid state has repeatedly changed from absolute despotism to republicanism, not forgetting the intermediate stages of oligarchy, limited monarchy, and even gynocracy ; for I myself remember Alsatia governed for nearly nine months by an old fishwoman. Then it fell under the dominion of a broken attorney, who was dethroned by a reformed captain, who, proving tyrannical, was deposed by a hedge-parson, who was succeeded, upon resignation of his power, by Duke Jacob Hildebrod, of that name the first, whom Heaven long preserve.'

'And is this potentate's government,' said Lord Glenvarloch, forcing himself to take some interest in the conversation, 'of a despotic character ?'

'Pardon me, my lord,' said the Templar ; 'this said sovereign is too wise to incur, like many of his predecessors, the odium of wielding so important an authority by his own sole will. He has established a council of state, who regularly meet for their morning's draught at seven o'clock ; convene a second time at eleven for their *ante-meridiem*, or whet ; and, assembling in solemn conclave at the hour of two afternoon, for the purpose of consulting for the good of the commonwealth, are so prodigal of their labour in the service of the state that they seldom separate before midnight. Into this worthy senate, composed partly of Duke Hildebrod's predecessors in his high office, whom he has associated with him to prevent the envy attending sovereign and sole authority, I must presently introduce your lordship, that they may admit you to the immunities of the Friars, and assign you a place of residence.'

'Does their authority extend to such regulation ?' said Lord Glenvarloch.

'The council account it a main point of their privileges, my lord,' answered Lowestoffe ; 'and, in fact, it is one of the most powerful means by which they support their authority. For when Duke Hildebrod and his senate find a topping householder in the Friars becomes discontented and factious, it is but assigning him, for a lodger, some fat bankrupt, or new residenter, whose circumstances require refuge, and whose purse can pay for it, and the malecontent becomes as tractable as a lamb. As

for the poorer refugees, they let them shift as they can; but the registration of their names in the duke's entry-book, and the payment of garnish conforming to their circumstances, are never dispensed with; and the Friars would be a very unsafe residence for the stranger who should dispute these points of jurisdiction.'

'Well, Master Lowestoffe,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'I must be controlled by the circumstances which dictate to me this state of concealment; of course, I am desirous not to betray my name and rank.'

'It will be highly advisable, my lord,' said Lowestoffe, 'and is a case thus provided for in the statutes of the republic, or monarchy, or whatsoever you call it. He who desires that no questions shall be asked him concerning his name, cause of refuge, and the like, may escape the usual interrogations upon payment of double the garnish otherwise belonging to his condition. Complying with this essential stipulation, your lordship may register yourself as King of Bantam if you will, for not a question will be asked of you. But here comes our scout, with news of piece and tranquillity. Now, I will go with your lordship myself, and present you to the council of Alsatia, with all the influence which I have over them as an office-bearer in the Temple, which is not slight; for they have come halting off upon all occasions when we have taken part against them, and that they well know. The time is propitious, for as the council is now met in Alsatia, so the Temple walks are quiet. Now, my lord, throw your cloak about you, to hide your present exterior. You shall give it to the boy at the foot of the stairs that go down to the sanctuary; and as the ballad says that Queen Eleanor sunk at Charing Cross and rose at Queenhithe, so you shall sink a nobleman in the Temple Gardens and rise an Alsatian at Whitefriars.'

They went out accordingly, attended by the little scout, traversed the gardens, descended the stairs, and at the bottom the young Templar exclaimed, 'And now let us sing, with Ovid,

In nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas.

Off — off, ye lendings!' he continued, in the same vein. '*Via* the curtain that shadowed Borgia! But how now, my lord!' he continued, when he observed Lord Glenvarloch was really distressed at the degrading change in his situation, 'I trust you are not offended at my rattling folly! I would but reconcile

you to your present circumstances, and give you the tone of this strange place. Come, cheer up; I trust it will only be your residence for a very few days.'

Nigel was only able to press his hand, and reply in a whisper, 'I am sensible of your kindness. I know I must drink the cup which my own folly has filled for me. Pardon me that, at the first taste, I feel its bitterness.'

Reginald Lowestoffe was bustlingly officious and good-natured; but, used to live a scrambling, rakish course of life himself, he had not the least idea of the extent of Lord Glenvarloch's mental sufferings, and thought of his temporary concealment as if it were merely the trick of a wanton boy, who plays at hide-and-seek with his tutor. With the appearance of the place, too, he was familiar; but on his companion it produced a deep sensation.

The ancient sanctuary at Whitefriars lay considerably lower than the elevated terraces and gardens of the Temple, and was therefore generally involved in the damps and fogs arising from the Thames. The brick buildings by which it was occupied crowded closely on each other, for, in a place so rarely privileged, every foot of ground was valuable; but, erected in many cases by persons whose funds were inadequate to their speculations, the houses were generally insufficient, and exhibited the lamentable signs of having become ruinous while they were yet new. The wailing of children, the scolding of their mothers, the miserable exhibition of ragged linens hung from the windows to dry, spoke the wants and distresses of the wretched inhabitants; while the sounds of complaint were mocked and overwhelmed in the riotous shouts, oaths, profane songs, and boisterous laughter that issued from the alehouses and taverns, which, as the signs indicated, were equal in number to all the other houses; and, that the full character of the place might be evident, several faded, tinselled, and painted females looked boldly at the strangers from their open lattices, or more modestly seemed busied with the cracked flower-pots, filled with mignonette and rosemary, which were disposed in front of the windows, to the great risk of the passengers.

'*Semi-reducta Venus*,' said the Templar, pointing to one of these nymphs, who seemed afraid of observation, and partly concealed herself behind the casement, as she chirped to a miserable blackbird, the tenant of a wicker prison, which hung outside on the black brick wall. 'I know the face of yonder waistcoateer,' continued the guide, 'and I could wager a rose

noble, from the posture she stands in, that she has clean head-gear and a soiled night-rail. But here come two of the male inhabitants, smoking like moving volcanoes! These are roaring blades, whom Nicotia and Trinidad serve, I dare swear, in lieu of beef and pudding; for be it known to you, my lord, that the King's *Counterblast* against the Indian weed will no more pass current in Alsatia than will his writ of *capias*.

As he spoke, the two smokers approached — shaggy, un-combed ruffians, whose enormous mustachios were turned back over their ears, and mingled with the wild elf-locks of their hair, much of which was seen under the old beavers which they wore aside upon their heads, while some straggling portion escaped through the rents of the hats aforesaid. Their tarnished plush jerkins, large slops, or trunk-breeches, their broad greasy shoulder-belts, and discoloured scarfs, and, above all, the ostentatious manner in which the one wore a broadsword and the other an extravagantly long rapier and poniard, marked the true Alsatian bully, then, and for a hundred years afterwards, a well-known character.

'Tour out,' said the one ruffian to the other — 'tour the bien mort twiring at the gentry cove!' ¹

'I smell a spy,' replied the other, looking at Nigel. 'Chalk him across the peepers with your cheery.' ²

'Bing avast — bing avast!' replied his companion; 'yon other is rattling Reginald Lowestoffe of the Temple. I know him; he is a good boy, and free of the province.'

So saying, and enveloping themselves in another thick cloud of smoke, they went on without farther greeting.

'*Crasso in aere!*' said the Templar. 'You hear what a character the impudent knaves give me; but, so it serves your lordship's turn, I care not. And now, let me ask your lordship what name you will assume, for we are near the ducal palace of Duke Hildebrod.'

'I will be called Grahame,' said Nigel; 'it was my mother's name.'

'Grime,' repeated the Templar, 'will suit Alsatia well enough — both a grim and grimy place of refuge.'

'I said Grahame, sir, not Grime,' said Nigel, something shortly, and laying an emphasis on the vowel; for few Scotsmen understand raillery upon the subject of their names.

'I beg pardon, my lord,' answered the undisconcerted

¹ Look sharp. See how the girl is coquetting with the strange gallants!

² Slash him over the eyes with your dagger.

punster; 'but Graam will suit the circumstance, too: it signifies "tribulation" in the High Dutch, and your lordship must be considered as a man under trouble.'

Nigel laughed at the pertinacity of the Templar, who, proceeding to point out a sign representing, or believed to represent, a dog attacking a bull, and running at his head, in the true scientific style of onset — 'There,' said he, 'doth faithful Duke Hildebrod deal forth laws, as well as ale and strong waters, to his faithful Alsatians. Being a determined champion of Paris Garden, he has chosen a sign corresponding to his habits; and he deals in giving drink to the thirsty, that he himself may drink without paying, and receive pay for what is drunken by others. Let us enter the ever-open gate of this second Axylus.'

As they spoke, they entered the dilapidated tavern, which was, nevertheless, more ample in dimensions, and less ruinous, than many houses in the same evil neighbourhood. Two or three haggard, ragged drawers ran to and fro, whose looks, like those of owls, seemed only adapted for midnight, when other creatures sleep, and who by day seemed bleared, stupid, and only half awake. Guided by one of these blinking Ganymedes, they entered a room, where the feeble rays of the sun were almost wholly eclipsed by volumes of tobacco-smoke, rolled from the tubes of the company, while out of the cloudy sanctuary arose the old chant of —

'Old Sir Simon the King,
And old Sir Simon the King,
With his malmsey nose,
And his ale-dropped hose,
And sing hey ding-a-ding-ding.'

Duke Hildebrod, who himself condescended to chant this ditty to his loving subjects, was a monstrosly fat old man, with only one eye, and a nose which bore evidence to the frequency, strength, and depth of his potations. He wore a murrey-coloured plush jerkin, stained with the overflowings of the tankard, and much the worse for wear, and unbuttoned at bottom for the ease of his enormous paunch. Behind him lay a favourite bull-dog, whose round head and single black glancing eye, as well as the creature's great corpulence, gave it a burlesque resemblance to its master.

The well-beloved counsellors who surrounded the ducal throne, incensed it with tobacco, pledged its occupier in thick, clammy ale, and echoed back his choral songs, were satraps

worthy of such a soldan. The buff jerkin, broad belt, and long sword of one showed him to be a Low Country soldier, whose look of scowling importance and drunken impudence were designed to sustain his title to call himself a roving blade. It seemed to Nigel that he had seen this fellow somewhere or other. A hedge-parson, or buckle-beggar, as that order of priesthood has been irreverently termed, sat on the duke's left, and was easily distinguished by his torn band, flapped hat, and the remnants of a rusty cassock. Beside the parson sat a most wretched and meagre-looking old man, with a threadbare hood of coarse kersey upon his head and buttoned about his neck, while his pinched features, like those of old Daniel, were illuminated by

An eye
Through the last look of dotage still cunning and sly.

On his left was placed a broken attorney, who, for some malpractices, had been struck from the roll of practitioners, and who had nothing left of his profession excepting its roguery. One or two persons of less figure, amongst whom there was one face which, like that of the soldier, seemed not unknown to Nigel, though he could not recollect where he had seen it, completed the council-board of Jacob Duke Hildebrod.

The strangers had full time to observe all this; for his grace the duke, whether irresistibly carried on by the full tide of harmony, or whether to impress the strangers with a proper idea of his consequence, chose to sing his ditty to an end before addressing them, though, during the whole time, he closely scrutinised them with his single optic.

When Duke Hildebrod had ended his song, he informed his peers that a worthy officer of the Temple attended them, and commanded the captain and parson to abandon their easy-chairs in behalf of the two strangers, whom he placed on his right and left hand. The worthy representatives of the army and the church of Alsatia went to place themselves on a crazy form at the bottom of the table, which, ill calculated to sustain men of such weight, gave way under them, and the man of the sword and man of the gown were rolled over each other on the floor, amidst the exulting shouts of the company. They arose in wrath, contending which should vent his displeasure in the loudest and deepest oaths, a strife in which the parson's superior acquaintance with theology enabled him greatly to excel the captain, and were at length with difficulty tranquilised by the arrival of the alarmed waiters with more stable

chairs, and by a long draught of the cooling tankard. When this commotion was appeased, and the strangers courteously accommodated with flagons, after the fashion of the others present, the duke drank prosperity to the Temple in the most gracious manner, together with a cup of welcome to Master Reginald Lowestoffe; and, this courtesy having been thankfully accepted, the party honoured prayed permission to call for a gallon of Rhenish, over which he proposed to open his business.

The mention of a liquor so superior to their usual potations had an instant and most favourable effect upon the little senate; and its immediate appearance might be said to secure a favourable reception of Master Lowestoffe's proposition, which, after a round or two had circulated, he explained to be the admission of his friend, Master Nigel Grahame, to the benefit of the sanctuary and other immunities of Alsatia, in the character of a grand compounder; for so were those termed who paid a double fee at their matriculation, in order to avoid laying before the senate the peculiar circumstances which compelled them to take refuge there.

The worthy duke heard the proposition with glee, which glittered in his single eye; and no wonder, as it was a rare occurrence, and of peculiar advantage to his private revenue. Accordingly, he commanded his ducal register¹ to be brought him—a huge book, secured with brass clasps like a merchant's ledger, and whose leaves, stained with wine and slabbered with tobacco juice, bore the names probably of as many rogues as are to be found in the *Calendar of Newgate*.

Nigel was then directed to lay down two nobles as his ransom, and to claim privilege by reciting the following doggerel verses, which were dictated to him by the duke:—

'Your suppliant, by name
Nigel Grahame,
In fear of mishap
From a shoulder-tap,
And dreading a claw
From the talons of law,
That are sharper than briers,
His freedom to sue,
And rescue by you,
Through weapon and wit,
From warrant and writ,
From bailiff's hand,
From tipstaff's wand,
Is come hither to Whitefriars.'

¹ See Ducal Register of Alsatia. Note 25.

As Duke Hildebrod with a tremulous hand began to make the entry, and had already, with superfluous generosity, spelled Nigel with two g's instead of one, he was interrupted by the parson. This reverend gentleman had been whispering for a minute or two, not with the captain, but with that other individual who dwelt imperfectly, as we have already mentioned, in Nigel's memory, and being, perhaps, still something malcontent on account of the late accident, he now requested to be heard before the registration took place.

'The person,' he said, 'who hath now had the assurance to propose himself as a candidate for the privileges and immunities of this honourable society is, in plain terms, a beggarly Scot, and we have enough of these locusts in London already ; if we admit such palmer-worms and caterpillars to the sanctuary, we shall soon have the whole nation.'

'We are not entitled to inquire,' said Duke Hildebrod, 'whether he be Scot, or French, or English : seeing he has honourably laid down his garnish, he is entitled to our protection.'

'Word of denial, most sovereign duke,' replied the parson ; 'I ask him no questions. His speech bewrayeth him : he is a Galilean, and his garnish is forfeited for his assurance in coming within this our realm ; and I call on you, sir duke, to put the laws in force against him !'

The Templar here rose, and was about to interrupt the deliberations of the court, when the duke gravely assured him that he should be heard in behalf of his friend so soon as the council had finished their deliberations.

The attorney next rose, and, intimating that he was to speak to the point of law, said — 'It was easy to be seen that this gentleman did not come here in any civil case, and that he believed it to be the story they had already heard of, concerning a blow given within the verge of the Park ; that the sanctuary would not bear out the offender in such case ; and that the queer old chief would send down a broom which would sweep the streets of Alsatia from the Strand to the Stairs ; and it was even policy to think what evil might come to their republic by sheltering an alien in such circumstances.'

The captain, who had sat impatiently while these opinions were expressed, now sprung on his feet with the vehemence of a cork bouncing from a bottle of brisk beer, and turning up his mustachios with a martial air, cast a glance of contempt on the lawyer and churchman, while he thus expressed his opinion :

'Most noble Duke Hildebrod ! when I hear such base,

skeldering, coistril propositions come from the counsellors of your grace, and when I remember the huffs, the muns, and the Tityretu's by whom your grace's ancestors and predecessors were advised on such occasions, I begin to think the spirit of action is as dead in Alsatia as in my old grannam; and yet who thinks so thinks a lie, since I will find as many roaring boys in the Friars as shall keep the liberties against all the scavengers of Westminster. And, if we should be overborne for a turn, death and darkness! have we not time to send the gentleman off by water, either to Paris Garden or to the Bankside? and, if he is a gallant of true breed, will he not make us full amends for all the trouble we have? Let other societies exist by the law, I say that we brisk boys of the Fleet live in spite of it; and thrive best when we are in right opposition to sign and seal, writ and warrant, sergeant and tipstaff, catchpoll and bum-bailey.'

This speech was followed by a murmur of approbation, and Lowestoffe, striking in before the favourable sound had subsided, reminded the duke and his council how much the security of their state depended upon the amity of the Templars, who, by closing their gates, could at pleasure shut against the Alsatians the communication betwixt the Friars and the Temple, and that as they conducted themselves on this occasion, so would they secure or lose the benefit of his interest with his own body, which they knew to be not inconsiderable. 'And, in respect of my friend being a Scotsman and alien, as has been observed by the reverend divine and learned lawyer, you are to consider,' said Lowestoffe, 'for what he is pursued hither — why, for giving the bastinado, not to an Englishman, but to one of his own countrymen. And for my own simple part,' he continued, touching Lord Glenvarloch at the same time, to make him understand he spoke but in jest, 'if all the Scots in London were to fight a Welsh main, and kill each other to a man, the survivor would, in my humble opinion, be entitled to our gratitude, as having done a most acceptable service to poor Old England.'

A shout of laughter and applause followed this ingenious apology for the client's state of alienage; and the Templar followed up his plea with the following pithy proposition: 'I know well,' said he, 'it is the custom of the fathers of this old and honourable republic ripely and well to consider all their proceedings over a proper allowance of liquor; and far be it from me to propose the breach of so laudable a custom, or to

pretend that such an affair as the present can be well and constitutionally considered during the discussion of a pitiful gallon of Rhenish. But as it is the same thing to this honourable conclave whether they drink first and determine afterwards, or whether they determine first and drink afterwards, I propose your grace, with the advice of your wise and potent senators, shall pass your edict, granting to mine honourable friend the immunities of the place, and assigning him a lodging, according to your wise forms, to which he will presently retire, being somewhat spent with this day's action; whereupon I will presently order you a rundlet of Rhenish, with a corresponding quantity of neats' tongues and pickled herrings, to make you all as glorious as George-a-Green.'

This overture was received with a general shout of applause, which altogether drowned the voice of the dissidents, if any there were amongst the Alsatian senate who could have resisted a proposal so popular. The words of, 'kind heart! — noble gentleman! — generous gallant!' flew from mouth to mouth; the inscription of the petitioner's name in the great book was hastily completed, and the oath administered to him by the worthy doge. Like the Laws of the Twelve Tables, of the ancient Cambro-Britons, and other primitive nations, it was couched in poetry, and ran as follows:—

'By spigot and barrel,
By billboe and buff,
Thou art sworn to the quarrel
Of the blades of the huff.
For Whitefriars and its claims
To be champion or martyr,
And to fight for its dames
Like a Knight of the Garter.'

Nigel felt, and indeed exhibited, some disgust at this mumery; but, the Templar reminding him that he was too far advanced to draw back, he repeated the words, or rather assented as they were repeated by Duke Hildebrod, who concluded the ceremony by allowing him the privilege of sanctuary, in the following form of prescriptive doggerel:—

'From the touch of the tip,
From the blight of the warrant,
From the watchmen who skip
On the harman-beck's errand;
From the bailiff's cramp speech,
That makes man a thrall,

I charm thee from each,
 And I charm thee from all.
 Thy freedom 's complete
 As a blade of the huff,
 To be cheated and cheat,
 To be cuff'd and to cuff ;
 To stride, swear, and swagger,
 To drink till you stagger ;
 To stare and to stab,
 And to brandish your dagger
 In the cause of your drab ;
 To walk wool-ward in winter,
 Drink brandy, and smoke,
 And go *fresco* in summer
 For want of a cloak ;
 To eke out your living
 By the wag of your elbow,
 By fulham and gourd,
 And by baring of bilboe ;
 To live by your shifts,
 And to swear by your honour,
 Are the freedom and gifts
 Of which I am the donor.' ¹

This homily being performed, a dispute arose concerning the special residence to be assigned the new brother of the sanctuary ; for, as the Alsations held it a maxim in their commonwealth that ass's milk fattens, there was usually a competition among the inhabitants which should have the managing, as it was termed, of a new member of the society.

The Hector who had spoken so warmly and critically in Nigel's behalf stood out now chivalrously in behalf of a certain Blowselinda, or Bonstrops, who had, it seems, a room to hire, once the occasional residence of Slicing Dick of Paddington, who lately suffered at Tyburn, and whose untimely exit had been hitherto mourned by the damsel in solitary widowhood, after the fashion of the turtle-dove.

The captain's interest was, however, overruled in behalf of the old gentleman in the kersey hood, who was believed, even at his extreme age, to understand the plucking of a pigeon as well or better than any man of Alsatia.

This venerable personage was a usurer of some notoriety, called Trapbois, and had very lately done the state considerable service in advancing a subsidy necessary to secure a fresh importation of liquors to the duke's cellars, the wine-merchant

¹ Of the cant words used in this inaugural oration, some are obvious in their meaning, others, as harman-beck (constable) and the like, derive their source from that ancient piece of lexicography, the *Slang Dictionary*.

at the Vintry being scrupulous to deal with so great a man for anything but ready money.

When, therefore, the old gentleman arose, and with much coughing reminded the duke that he had a poor apartment to let, the claims of all others were set aside, and Nigel was assigned to Trapbois as his guest.

No sooner was this arrangement made than Lord Glenvarloch expressed to Lowestoffe his impatience to leave this discreditable assembly, and took his leave with a careless haste which, but for the rundlet of Rhenish wine that entered just as he left the apartment, might have been taken in bad part. The young Templar accompanied his friend to the house of the old usurer, with the road to which he and some other youngsters about the Temple were even but too well acquainted. On the way, he assured Lord Glenvarloch that he was going to the only clean house in Whitefriars—a property which it owed solely to the exertions of the old man's only daughter, an elderly damsel, ugly enough to frighten sin, yet likely to be wealthy enough to tempt a Puritan, so soon as the devil had got her old dad for his due. As Lowestoffe spoke thus, they knocked at the door of the house, and the sour, stern countenance of the female by whom it was opened fully confirmed all that the Templar had said of the hostess. She heard with an ungracious and discontented air the young Templar's information that the gentleman, his companion, was to be her father's lodger, muttered something about the trouble it was likely to occasion, but ended by showing the stranger's apartment, which was better than could have been augured from the general appearance of the place, and much larger in extent than that which he had occupied at Paul's Wharf, though inferior to it in neatness.

Lowestoffe, having thus seen his friend fairly installed in his new apartment, and having obtained for him a note of the rate at which he could be accommodated with victuals from a neighbouring cook's shop, now took his leave, offering, at the same time, to send the whole, or any part, of Lord Glenvarloch's baggage from his former place of residence to his new lodging. Nigel mentioned so few articles, that the Templar could not help observing, that his lordship, it would seem, did not intend to enjoy his new privileges long.

'They are too little suited to my habits and taste that I should do so,' replied Lord Glenvarloch.

'You may change your opinion to-morrow,' said Lowestoffe;

‘and so I wish you good even. To-morrow I will visit you betimes.’

The morning came, but instead of the Templar it brought only a letter from him. The epistle stated that Lowestoffe’s visit to Alsatia had drawn down the animadversions of some crabbed old pantaloons among the benchers, and that he judged it wise not to come hither at present, for fear of attracting too much attention to Lord Glenvarloch’s place of residence. He stated that he had taken measures for the safety of his baggage, and would send him, by a safe hand, his money-casket and what articles he wanted. Then followed some sage advices, dictated by Lowestoffe’s acquaintance with Alsatia and its manners. He advised him to keep the usurer in the most absolute uncertainty concerning the state of his funds; never to throw a main with the captain, who was in the habit of playing dry-fisted, and paying his losses with three vowels; and, finally, to beware of Duke Hildebrod, who was as sharp, he said, as a needle, though he had no more eyes than are possessed by that necessary implement of female industry.

CHAPTER XVIII

Mother. What ! dazzled by a flash of Cupid's mirror,
With which the boy, as mortal urchins wont,
Flings back the sunbeam in the eye of passengers,
Then laughs to see them stumble !

Daughter. Mother, no ;
It was a lightning-flash which dazzled me,
And never shall these eyes see true again.

Beef and Pudding, an old English Comedy.

IT is necessary that we should leave our hero Nigel for a time, although in a situation neither safe, comfortable, nor creditable, in order to detail some particulars which have immediate connexion with his fortunes.

It was but the third day after he had been forced to take refuge in the house of old Trapbois, the noted usurer of Whitefriars, commonly called Golden Trapbois, when the pretty daughter of old Ramsay, the watchmaker, after having piously seen her father finish his breakfast (from the fear that he might, in an abstruse fit of thought, swallow the salt-cellar instead of a crust of the brown loaf), set forth from the house as soon as he was again plunged into the depth of calculation, and, accompanied only by that faithful old drudge, Janet, the Scots laundress, to whom her whims were laws, made her way to Lombard Street, and disturbed, at the unusual hour of eight in the morning, Aunt Judith, the sister of her worthy godfather.

The venerable maiden received her young visitor with no great complacency ; for, naturally enough, she had neither the same admiration of her very pretty countenance nor allowance for her foolish and girlish impatience of temper which Master George Heriot entertained. Still, Mistress Margaret was a favourite of her brother's, whose will was to Aunt Judith a supreme law ; and she contented herself with asking her untimely visitor, 'What she made so early with her pale, chitty face in the streets of London ?'

'I would speak with the Lady Hermione,' answered the almost breathless girl, while the blood ran so fast to her face as totally to remove the objection of paleness which Aunt Judith had made to her complexion.

'With the Lady Hermione!' said Aunt Judith — 'with the Lady Hermione! and at this time of the morning, when she will scarce see any of the family, even at seasonable hours? You are crazy, you silly wench, or you abuse the indulgence which my brother and the lady have shown to you.'

'Indeed — indeed I have not,' repeated Margaret, struggling to retain the unbidden tear which seemed ready to burst out on the slightest occasion. 'Do but say to the lady that your brother's god-daughter desires earnestly to speak to her, and I know she will not refuse to see me.'

Aunt Judith bent an earnest, suspicious, and inquisitive glance on her young visitor. 'You might make me your secretary, my lassie,' she said, 'as well as the Lady Hermione. I am older, and better skilled to advise. I live more in the world than one who shuts herself up within four rooms, and I have the better means to assist you.'

'Oh! no — no — no,' said Margaret, eagerly, and with more earnest sincerity than complaisance; 'there are some things to which you cannot advise me, Aunt Judith. It is a case — pardon me, my dear aunt — a case beyond your counsel.'

'I am glad on't, maiden,' said Aunt Judith, somewhat angrily; 'for I think the follies of the young people of this generation would drive mad an old brain like mine. Here you come on the viretot, through the whole streets of London, to talk some nonsense to a lady who scarce sees God's sun but when he shines on a brick wall. But I will tell her you are here.'

She went away, and shortly returned with a dry — 'Mistress Marget, the lady will be glad to see you; and that's more, my young madam, than you had a right to count upon.'

Mistress Margaret hung her head in silence, too much perplexed by the train of her own embarrassed thoughts for attempting either to conciliate Aunt Judith's kindness, or, which on other occasions would have been as congenial to her own humour, to retaliate on her cross-tempered remarks and manner. She followed Aunt Judith, therefore, in silence and dejection, to the strong oaken door which divided the Lady Hermione's apartments from the rest of George Heriot's spacious house.

At the door of this sanctuary it is necessary to pause, in order to correct the reports with which Richie Moniplies had filled his master's ear, respecting the singular appearance of that lady's attendance at prayers, whom we now own to be by name the Lady Hermione. Some part of these exaggerations had been communicated to the worthy Scotsman by Jenkin Vincent, who was well experienced in the species of wit which has been long a favourite in the city, under the names of cross-biting, giving the dor, bamboozling, cramming, hoaxing, hum-bugging, and quizzing; for which sport Richie Moniplies, with his solemn gravity, totally unapprehensive of a joke, and his natural propensity to the marvellous, formed an admirable subject. Farther ornaments the tale had received from Richie himself, whose tongue, especially when oiled with good liquor, had a considerable tendency to amplification, and who failed not, while he retailed to his master all the wonderful circumstances narrated by Vincent, to add to them many conjectures of his own, which his imagination had over-hastily converted into facts.

Yet the life which Lady Hermione had led for two years, during which she had been the inmate of George Heriot's house, was so singular as almost to sanction many of the wild reports which went abroad. The house which the worthy goldsmith inhabited had in former times belonged to a powerful and wealthy baronial family, which, during the reign of Henry VIII., terminated in a dowager lady, very wealthy, very devout, and most inalienably attached to the Catholic faith. The chosen friend of the Honourable Lady Foljambe was the abbess of St. Roque's nunnery, like herself, a conscientious, rigid, and devoted Papist. When the house of St. Roque was despotically dissolved by the fiat of the impetuous monarch, the Lady Foljambe received her friend into her spacious mansion, together with two vestal sisters, who, like their abbess, were determined to follow the tenor of their vows, instead of embracing the profane liberty which the monarch's will had thrown in their choice. For their residence, the Lady Foljambe contrived, with all secrecy—for Henry might not have relished her interference—to set apart a suite of four rooms, with a little closet fitted up as an oratory, or chapel; the whole apartments fenced by a strong oaken door to exclude strangers, and accommodated with a turning-wheel to receive necessities, according to the practice of all nunneries. In this retreat the abbess of St. Roque and her attendants passed many years,

communicating only with the Lady Foljambe, who, in virtue of their prayers, and of the support she afforded them, accounted herself little less than a saint on earth. The abbess, fortunately for herself, died before her munificent patroness, who lived deep in Queen Elizabeth's time, ere she was summoned by fate.

The Lady Foljambe was succeeded in this mansion by a sour fanatic knight, a distant and collateral relation, who claimed the same merit for expelling the priestesses of Baal which his predecessor had founded on maintaining the votaresses of Heaven. Of the two unhappy nuns, driven from their ancient refuge, one went beyond sea; the other, unable from old age to undertake such a journey, died under the roof of a faithful Catholic widow of low degree. Sir Paul Crambagge, having got rid of the nuns, spoiled the chapel of its ornaments, and had thoughts of altogether destroying the apartments, until checked by the reflection that the operation would be an unnecessary expense, since he only inhabited three rooms of the large mansion, and had not therefore the slightest occasion for any addition to its accommodations. His son proved a waster and a prodigal, and from him the house was bought by our friend George Heriot, who, finding, like Sir Paul, the house more than sufficiently ample for his accommodation, left the Foljambe apartments, or St. Roque's rooms, as they were called, in the state in which he found them.

About two years and a half before our history opened, when Heriot was absent upon an expedition to the Continent, he sent special orders to his sister and his cash-keeper, directing that the Foljambe apartments should be fitted up handsomely, though plainly, for the reception of a lady, who would make them her residence for some time, and who would live more or less with his own family according to her pleasure. He also directed that the necessary repairs should be made with secrecy, and that as little should be said as possible upon the subject of his letter.

When the time of his return came nigh, Aunt Judith and the household were on the tenter-hooks of impatience. Master George came, as he had intimated, accompanied by a lady, so eminently beautiful that, had it not been for her extreme and uniform paleness, she might have been reckoned one of the loveliest creatures on earth. She had with her an attendant, or humble companion, whose business seemed only to wait upon her. This person, a reserved woman, and by her dialect a foreigner, aged about fifty, was called by the lady Monna Paula,

and by Master Heriot and others Mademoiselle Pauline. She slept in the same room with her patroness at night, ate in her apartment, and was scarcely ever separated from her during the day.

These females took possession of the nunnery of the devout abbess, and, without observing the same rigorous seclusion, according to the letter, seemed wellnigh to restore the apartments to the use to which they had been originally designed. The new inmates lived and took their meals apart from the rest of the family. With the domestics Lady Hermione, for so she was termed, held no communication, and Mademoiselle Pauline only such as was indispensable, which she despatched as briefly as possible. Frequent and liberal largesses reconciled the servants to this conduct; and they were in the habit of observing to each other, that to do a service for Mademoiselle Pauline was like finding a fairy treasure.

To Aunt Judith the Lady Hermione was kind and civil, but their intercourse was rare; on which account the elder lady felt some pangs both of curiosity and injured dignity. But she knew her brother so well, and loved him so dearly, that his will, once expressed, might be truly said to become her own. The worthy citizen was not without a spice of the dogmatism which grows on the best disposition when a word is a law to all around. Master George did not endure to be questioned by his family, and, when he had generally expressed his will that the Lady Hermione should live in the way most agreeable to her, and that no inquiries should be made concerning her history, or her motives for observing such strict seclusion, his sister well knew that he would have been seriously displeased with any attempt to pry into the secret.

But, though Heriot's servants were bribed, and his sister awed, into silent acquiescence in these arrangements, they were not of a nature to escape the critical observation of the neighbourhood. Some opined that the wealthy goldsmith was about to turn Papist, and re-establish Lady Foljambe's nunnery, others that he was going mad, others that he was either going to marry or to do worse. Master George's constant appearance at church, and the knowledge that the supposed votaress always attended when the prayers of the English ritual were read in the family, liberated him from the first of these suspicions; those who had to transact business with him upon 'change could not doubt the soundness of Master Heriot's mind; and, to confute the other rumours, it was credibly re-

tion and coquetry. But the little lass had sense and shrewdness enough to keep her failings out of sight of her godfather, to whom she was sincerely attached ; and so high she stood in his favour that, at his recommendation, she obtained permission to visit the recluse Lady Hermione.

The singular mode of life which that lady observed, her great beauty, rendered even more interesting by her extreme paleness, the conscious pride of being admitted farther than the rest of the world into the society of a person who was wrapped in so much mystery, made a deep impression on the mind of Margaret Ramsay ; and though their conversations were at no time either long or confidential, yet, proud of the trust reposed in her, Margaret was as secret respecting their tenor as if every word repeated had been to cost her life. No inquiry, however artfully backed by flattery and insinuation, whether on the part of Dame Ursula or any other person equally inquisitive, could wring from the little maiden one word of what she heard or saw after she entered these mysterious and secluded apartments. The slightest question concerning Master Heriot's ghost was sufficient, at her gayest moment, to check the current of her communicative prattle and render her silent.

We mention this chiefly to illustrate the early strength of Margaret's character — a strength concealed under a hundred freakish whims and humours, as an ancient and massive buttress is disguised by its fantastic covering of ivy and wild-flowers. In truth, if the damsel had told all she heard or saw within the Foljambe apartments, she would have said but little to gratify the curiosity of inquirers.

At the earlier period of their acquaintance, the Lady Hermione was wont to reward the attentions of her little friend with small but elegant presents, and entertain her by a display of foreign rarities and curiosities, many of them of considerable value. Sometimes the time was passed in a way much less agreeable to Margaret, by her receiving lessons from Pauline in the use of the needle. But although her preceptress practised these arts with a dexterity then only known in foreign convents, the pupil proved so incorrigibly idle and awkward that the task of needlework was at length given up, and lessons of music substituted in their stead. Here also Pauline was excellently qualified as an instructress, and Margaret, more successful in a science for which nature had gifted her, made proficiency both in vocal and instrumental music. These lessons passed in presence of the Lady Hermione, to whom

they seemed to give pleasure. She sometimes added her own voice to the performance in a pure, clear stream of liquid melody ; but this was only when the music was of a devotional cast. As Margaret became older, her communications with the recluse assumed a different character. She was allowed, if not encouraged, to tell whatever she had remarked out of doors, and the Lady Hermione, while she remarked the quick, sharp, and retentive powers of observation possessed by her young friend, often found sufficient reason to caution her against rashness in forming opinions and giddy petulance in expressing them.

The habitual awe with which she regarded this singular personage induced Mistress Margaret, though by no means delighting in contradiction or reproof, to listen with patience to her admonitions, and to make full allowance for the good intentions of the patroness by whom they were bestowed ; although in her heart she could hardly conceive how Madame Hermione, who never stirred from the Foljambe apartments, should think of teaching knowledge of the world to one who walked twice a-week between Temple Bar and Lombard Street, besides parading in the Park every Sunday that proved to be fair weather. Indeed, pretty Mistress Margaret was so little inclined to endure such remonstrances, that her intercourse with the inhabitants of the Foljambe apartments would have probably slackened as her circle of acquaintance increased in the external world ; had she not, on the one hand, entertained an habitual reverence for her mistress, of which she could not divest herself, and been flattered, on the other, by being, to a certain degree, the depository of a confidence for which others thirsted in vain. Besides, although the conversation of Hermione was uniformly serious, it was not in general either formal or severe ; nor was the lady offended by flights of levity which Mistress Margaret sometimes ventured on in her presence, even when they were such as made Monna Paula cast her eyes upwards, and sigh with that compassion which a devotee extends towards the votaries of a trivial and profane world. Thus, upon the whole, the little maiden was disposed to submit, though not without some wincing, to the grave admonitions of the Lady Hermione ; and the rather that the mystery annexed to the person of her mistress was in her mind early associated with a vague idea of wealth and importance, which had been rather confirmed than lessened by many accidental circumstances which she had noticed since she was more capable of observation.

It frequently happens that the counsel, which we reckon intrusive when offered to us unasked, becomes precious in our eyes when the pressure of difficulties renders us more diffident of our own judgment than we are apt to find ourselves in the hours of ease and indifference; and this is more especially the case if we suppose that our adviser may also possess power and inclination to back his counsel with effectual assistance. Mistress Margaret was now in that situation. She was, or believed herself to be, in a condition where both advice and assistance might be necessary; and it was therefore, after an anxious and sleepless night, that she resolved to have recourse to the Lady Hermione, who she knew would readily afford her the one, and, as she hoped, might also possess means of giving her the other. The conversation between them will best explain the purport of the visit.

CHAPTER XIX

By this good light, a wench of matchless mettle !
This were a leaguer-lass to love a soldier,
To bind his wounds, and kiss his bloody brow,
And sing a roundel as she help'd to arm him,
Though the rough foeman's drums were beat so nigh,
They seem'd to bear the burden.

Old Play.

WHEN Mistress Margaret entered the Foljambe apartment, she found the inmates employed in their usual manner — the lady in reading, and her attendant in embroidering a large piece of tapestry, which had occupied her ever since Margaret had been first admitted within these secluded chambers.

Hermione nodded kindly to her visitor, but did not speak; and Margaret, accustomed to this reception, and in the present case not sorry for it, as it gave her an interval to collect her thoughts, stooped over Monna Paula's frame, and observed, in a half whisper, 'You were just so far as that rose, Monna, when I first saw you; see, there is the mark where I had the bad luck to spoil the flower in trying to catch the stitch — I was little above fifteen then. These flowers make me an old woman, Monna Paula.'

'I wish they could make you a wise one, my child,' answered Monna Paula, in whose esteem pretty Mistress Margaret did not stand quite so high as in that of her patroness; partly owing to her natural austerity, which was something intolerant of youth and gaiety, and partly to the jealousy with which a favourite domestic regards any one whom she considers as a sort of rival in the affections of her mistress.

'What is it you say to Monna, little one?' asked the lady.

'Nothing, madam,' replied Mistress Margaret, 'but that I have seen the real flowers blossom three times over since I first saw Monna Paula working in her canvas garden, and her violets have not budded yet.'

'True lady-bird,' replied Hermione; 'but the buds that are

longest in blossoming will last the longest in flower. You have seen them in the garden bloom thrice, but you have seen them fade thrice also; now, Monna Paula's will remain in blow for ever: they will fear neither frost nor tempest.'

'True, madam,' answered Mistress Margaret; 'but neither have they life or odour.'

'That, little one,' replied the recluse, 'is to compare a life agitated by hope and fear, and chequered with success and disappointment, and fevered by the effects of love and hatred — a life of passion and of feeling, saddened and shortened by its exhausting alternations — to a calm and tranquil existence, animated but by a sense of duties, and only employed, during its smooth and quiet course, in the unwearied discharge of them. Is that the moral of your answer?'

'I do not know, madam,' answered Mistress Margaret; 'but, of all birds in the air, I would rather be the lark, that sings while he is drifting down the summer breeze, than the weather-cock, that sticks fast yonder upon his iron perch, and just moves so much as to discharge his duty, and tell us which way the wind blows.'

'Metaphors are no arguments, my pretty maiden,' said the Lady Hermione, smiling.

'I am sorry for that, madam,' answered Margaret; 'for they are such a pretty indirect way of telling one's mind when it differs from one's betters; besides, on this subject there is no end of them, and they are so civil and becoming withal.'

'Indeed!' replied the lady; 'let me hear some of them, I pray you.'

'It would be, for example, very bold in me,' said Margaret, 'to say to your ladyship that, rather than live a quiet life, I would like a little variety of hope and fear, and liking and disliking — and — and — and the other sort of feelings which your ladyship is pleased to speak of; but I may say freely and without blame that I like a butterfly better than a beetle; or a trembling aspen better than a grim Scots fir, that never wags a leaf; or that, of all the wood, brass, and wire that ever my father's fingers put together, I do hate and detest a certain huge old clock of the German fashion, that rings hours and half hours, and quarters and half quarters, as if it were of such consequence that the world should know it was wound up and going. Now, dearest lady, I wish you would only compare that clumsy, clanging, Dutch-looking piece of lumber with the beautiful timepiece that Master Heriot caused my father to

make for your ladyship, which uses to play a hundred merry tunes, and turns out, when it strikes the hour, a whole band of morrice-dancers, to trip the hays to the measure.'

'And which of these timepieces goes the truest, Margaret?' said the lady.

'I must confess the old Dutchman has the advantage in that,' said Margaret. 'I fancy you are right, madam, and that comparisons are no arguments, at least mine has not brought me through.'

'Upon my word, maiden Margaret,' said the lady, smiling, 'you have been of late thinking very much of these matters.'

'Perhaps too much, madam,' said Margaret, so low as only to be heard by the lady, behind the back of whose chair she had now placed herself. The words were spoken very gravely, and accompanied by a half sigh, which did not escape the attention of her to whom they were addressed. The Lady Hermione turned immediately round and looked earnestly at Margaret, then paused for a moment, and, finally, commanded Monna Paula to carry her frame and embroidery into the ante-chamber. When they were left alone, she desired her young friend to come from behind the chair, on the back of which she still rested, and sit down beside her upon a stool.

'I will remain thus, madam, under your favour,' answered Margaret, without changing her posture; 'I would rather you heard me without seeing me.'

'In God's name, maiden,' returned her patroness, 'what is it you can have to say that may not be uttered face to face to so true a friend as I am?'

Without making any direct answer, Margaret only replied, 'You were right, dearest lady, when you said I had suffered my feelings too much to engross me of late. I have done very wrong, and you will be angry with me — so will my godfather; but I cannot help it — he must be rescued.'

'*He!*' repeated the lady, with emphasis. 'That brief little word does, indeed, so far explain your mystery; but come from behind the chair, you silly popinjay! I will wager you have suffered yonder gay young apprentice to sit too near your heart. I have not heard you mention young Vincent for many a day; perhaps he has not been out of mouth and out of mind both. Have you been so foolish as to let him speak to you seriously? I am told he is a bold youth.'

'Not bold enough to say anything that could displease me, madam,' said Margaret.

'Perhaps, then, you were *not* displeased,' said the lady; 'or perhaps he has not *spoken*, which would be wiser and better. Be open-hearted, my love; your godfather will soon return, and we will take him into our consultations. If the young man is industrious, and come of honest parentage, his poverty may be no such insurmountable obstacle. But you are both of you very young, Margaret; I know your godfather will expect that the youth shall first serve out his apprenticeship.'

Margaret had hitherto suffered the lady to proceed under the mistaken impression which she had adopted simply because she could not tell how to interrupt her; but pure despite at hearing her last words gave her boldness at length to say, 'I crave your pardon, madam; but neither the youth you mention, nor any apprentice or master within the city of London——'

'Margaret,' said the lady, in reply, 'the contemptuous tone with which you mention those of your own class, many hundreds if not thousands of whom are in all respects better than yourself, and would greatly honour you by thinking of you, is, methinks, no warrant for the wisdom of your choice—for a choice, it seems, there is. Who is it, maiden, to whom you have thus rashly attached yourself?—rashly, I fear it must be.'

'It is the young Scottish Lord Glenvarloch, madam,' answered Margaret, in a low and modest tone, but sufficiently firm, considering the subject.

'The young Lord of Glenvarloch!' repeated the lady, in great surprise. 'Maiden, you are distracted in your wits.'

'I knew you would say so, madam,' answered Margaret. 'It is what another person has already told me; it is, perhaps, what all the world would tell me; it is what I am sometimes disposed to tell myself. But look at me, madam, for I will now come before you, and tell me if there is madness or distraction in my look and word when I repeat to you again, that I have fixed my affections on this young nobleman.'

'If there is not madness in your look or word, maiden, there is infinite folly in what you say,' answered the Lady Hermione, sharply. 'When did you ever hear that misplaced love brought anything but wretchedness? Seek a match among your equals, Margaret, and escape the countless kinds of risk and misery that must attend an affection beyond your degree. Why do you smile, maiden? Is there aught to cause scorn in what I say?'

'Surely no, madam,' answered Margaret. 'I only smiled to think how it should happen that, while rank made such a wide

difference between creatures formed from the same clay, the wit of the vulgar should, nevertheless, jump so exactly the same length with that of the accomplished and the exalted. It is but the variation of the phrase which divides them. Dame Ursley told me the very same thing which your ladyship has but now uttered ; only you, madam, talk of countless misery, and Dame Ursley spoke of the gallows, and Mistress Turner, who was hanged upon it.'

'Indeed!' answered the Lady Hermione; 'and who may Dame Ursley be, that your wise choice has associated with me in the difficult task of advising a fool?'

'The barber's wife at next door, madam,' answered Margaret, with feigned simplicity, but far from being sorry at heart that she had found an indirect mode of mortifying her monitress. 'She is the wisest woman that I know, next to your ladyship.'

'A proper confidante,' said the lady, 'and chosen with the same delicate sense of what is due to yourself and others! But what ails you, maiden — where are you going?'

'Only to ask Dame Ursley's advice,' said Margaret, as if about to depart; 'for I see your ladyship is too angry to give me any, and the emergency is pressing.'

'What emergency, thou simple one?' said the lady, in a kinder tone. 'Sit down, maiden, and tell me your tale. It is true you are a fool, and a pettish fool to boot; but then you are a child — an amiable child, with all your self-willed folly — and we must help you if we can. Sit down, I say, as you are desired, and you will find me a safer and wiser counsellor than the barber-woman. And tell me how you come to suppose that you have fixed your heart unalterably upon a man whom you have seen, as I think, but once.'

'I have seen him oftener,' said the damsel, looking down; 'but I have only spoken to him once. I should have been able to get that *once* out of my head, though the impression was so deep that I could even now repeat every trifling word he said, but other things have since riveted it in my bosom for ever.'

'Maiden,' replied the lady, '"for ever" is the word which comes most lightly on the lips in such circumstances, but which, not the less, is almost the last that we should use. The fashion of this world, its passions, its joys, and its sorrows, pass away like the winged breeze; there is nought for ever but that which belongs to the world beyond the grave.'

'You have corrected me justly, madam,' said Margaret, calmly; 'I ought only to have spoken of my present state of

mind as what will last me for my lifetime, which unquestionably may be but short.'

'And what is there in this Scottish lord that can rivet what concerns him so closely in your fancy?' said the lady. 'I admit him a personable man, for I have seen him; and I will suppose him courteous and agreeable. But what are his accomplishments besides, for these surely are not uncommon attributes?'

'He is unfortunate, madam — most unfortunate, and surrounded by snares of different kinds, ingeniously contrived to ruin his character, destroy his estate, and, perhaps, to reach even his life. These schemes have been devised by avarice originally, but they are now followed close by vindictive ambition, animated, I think, by the absolute and concentrated spirit of malice; for the Lord Dalgarno —'

'Here, Monna Paula — Monna Paula!' exclaimed the Lady Hermione, interrupting her young friend's narrative. 'She hears me not,' she answered, rising and going out, 'I must seek her — I will return instantly.' She returned accordingly very soon after. 'You mentioned a name which I thought was familiar to me,' she said; 'but Monna Paula has put me right. I know nothing of your lord — how was it you named him?'

'Lord Dalgarno,' said Margaret, 'the wickedest man who lives. Under pretence of friendship, he introduced the Lord Glenvarloch to a gambling-house with the purpose of engaging him in deep play; but he with whom the perfidious traitor had to deal was too virtuous, moderate, and cautious to be caught in a snare so open. What did they next but turn his own moderation against him, and persuade others that, because he would not become the prey of wolves, he herded with them for a share of their booty! And, while this base Lord Dalgarno was thus undermining his unsuspecting countryman, he took every measure to keep him surrounded by creatures of his own, to prevent him from attending court and mixing with those of his proper rank. Since the Gunpowder Treason, there never was a conspiracy more deeply laid, more basely and more deliberately pursued.'

The lady smiled sadly at Margaret's vehemence, but sighed the next moment, while she told her young friend how little she knew the world she was about to live in, since she testified so much surprise at finding it full of villainy.

'But by what means,' she added, 'could you, maiden, become possessed of the secret views of a man so cautious as Lord Dalgarno — as villains in general are?'

'Permit me to be silent on that subject,' said the maiden. 'I could not tell you without betraying others; let it suffice that my tidings are as certain as the means by which I acquired them are secret and sure. But I must not tell them even to you.'

'You are too bold, Margaret,' said the lady, 'to traffic in such matters at your early age. It is not only dangerous, but even unbecoming and unmaidenly.'

'I knew you would say that also,' said Margaret, with more meekness and patience than she usually showed on receiving reproof; 'but, God knows, my heart acquits me of every other feeling save that of the wish to assist this most innocent and betrayed man. I contrived to send him warning of his friend's falsehood; alas! my care has only hastened his utter ruin, unless speedy aid be found. He charged his false friend with treachery, and drew on him in the Park, and is now liable to the fatal penalty due for breach of privilege of the king's palace.'

'This is indeed an extraordinary tale,' said Hermione. 'Is Lord Glenvarloch then in prison?'

'No, madam, thank God, but in the sanctuary at Whitefriars. It is matter of doubt whether it will protect him in such a case: they speak of a warrant from the Lord Chief Justice. A gentleman of the Temple has been arrested, and is in trouble, for having assisted him in his flight. Even his taking temporary refuge in that base place, though from extreme necessity, will be used to the further defaming him. All this I know, and yet I cannot rescue him — cannot rescue him save by your means.'

'By my means, maiden?' said the lady; 'you are beside yourself! What means can I possess in this secluded situation of assisting this unfortunate nobleman?'

'You *have* means,' said Margaret, eagerly — 'you have those means, unless I mistake greatly, which can do anything — can do everything — in this city — in this world: you have wealth, and the command of a small portion of it will enable me to extricate him from his present danger. He will be enabled and directed how to make his escape; and I ——' she paused.

'Will accompany him, doubtless, and reap the fruits of your sage exertions in his behalf?' said the Lady Hermione, ironically.

'May Heaven forgive you the unjust thought, lady,' answered Margaret. 'I will never see him more; but I shall have saved him, and the thought will make me happy.'

'A cold conclusion to so bold and warm a flame,' said the lady, with a smile which seemed to intimate incredulity.

'It is, however, the only one which I expect, madam — I could almost say the only one which I wish — I am sure I will use no efforts to bring about any other; if I am bold in his cause, I am timorous enough in my own. During our only interview I was unable to speak a word to him. He knows not the sound of my voice; and all that I have risked, and must yet risk, I am doing for one who, were he asked the question, would say he has long since forgotten that he ever saw, spoke to, or sat beside a creature of so little signification as I am.'

'This is a strange and unreasonable indulgence of a passion equally fanciful and dangerous,' said the Lady Hermione.

'You will *not* assist me, then?' said Margaret. 'Have good day then, madam. My secret, I trust, is safe in such honourable keeping.'

'Tarry yet a little,' said the lady, 'and tell me what resource you have to assist this youth, if you were supplied with money to put it in motion.'

'It is superfluous to ask me the question, madam,' answered Margaret, 'unless you purpose to assist me; and, if you do so purpose, it is still superfluous. You could not understand the means I must use, and time is too brief to explain.'

'But have you in reality such means?' said the lady.

'I have, with the command of a moderate sum,' answered Margaret Ramsay, 'the power of baffling all his enemies — of eluding the passion of the irritated King — the colder but more determined displeasure of the Prince — the vindictive spirit of Buckingham, so hastily directed against whomsoever crosses the path of his ambition — the cold concentrated malice of Lord Dalgarno — all, I can baffle them all!'

'But is this to be done without your own personal risk, Margaret?' replied the lady; 'for, be your purpose what it will, you are not to peril your own reputation or person in the romantic attempt of serving another; and I, maiden, am answerable to your godfather — to your benefactor and my own — not to aid you in any dangerous or unworthy enterprise.'

'Depend upon my word — my oath, dearest lady,' replied the supplicant, 'that I will act by the agency of others, and do not myself design to mingle in any enterprise in which my appearance might be either perilous or unwomanly.'

'I know not what to do,' said the Lady Hermione; 'it is perhaps incautious and inconsiderate in me to aid so wild a

project; yet the end seems honourable, if the means be sure. What is the penalty if he fall into their power?’

‘Alas — alas! the loss of his right hand!’ replied Margaret, her voice almost stifled with sobs.

‘Are the laws of England so cruel? Then there is mercy in Heaven alone,’ said the lady, ‘since, even in this free land, men are wolves to each other. Compose yourself, Margaret, and tell me what money is necessary to secure Lord Glenvarloch’s escape.’

‘Two hundred pieces,’ replied Margaret. ‘I would speak to you of restoring them — and I must one day have the power — only that I know — that is, I think — your ladyship is indifferent on that score.’

‘Not a word more of it,’ said the lady; ‘call Monna Paula hither.’

CHAPTER XX

Credit me, friend, it hath been ever thus,
Since the ark rested on Mount Ararat.
False man hath sworn, and woman hath believed,
Repented and reproach'd, and then believed once more.

The New World.

BY the time that Margaret returned with Monna Paula, the Lady Hermione was rising from the table at which she had been engaged in writing something on a small slip of paper, which she gave to her attendant.

'Monna Paula,' she said, 'carry this paper to Roberts, the cash-keeper; let him give you the money mentioned in the note, and bring it hither presently.'

Monna Paula left the room, and her mistress proceeded.

'I do not know,' she said, 'Margaret, if I have done, and am doing, well in this affair. My life has been one of strange seclusion, and I am totally unacquainted with the practical ways of this world—an ignorance which I know cannot be remedied by mere reading. I fear I am doing wrong to you, and perhaps to the laws of the country which affords me refuge, by thus indulging you; and yet there is something in my heart which cannot resist your entreaties.'

'Oh, listen to it—listen to it, dear, generous lady!' said Margaret, throwing herself on her knees and grasping those of her benefactress, and looking in that attitude like a beautiful mortal in the act of supplicating her tutelary angel; 'the laws of men are but the injunctions of mortality, but what the heart prompts is the echo of the voice from Heaven within us.'

'Rise—rise, maiden,' said Hermione; 'you affect me more than I thought I could have been moved by aught that should approach me. Rise and tell me whence it comes that, in so short a time, your thoughts, your looks, your speech, and even your slightest actions, are changed from those of a capricious

and fanciful girl to all this energy and impassioned eloquence of word and action ?'

'I am sure I know not, dearest lady,' said Margaret, looking down; 'but I suppose that, when I was a trifler, I was only thinking of trifles. What I now reflect is deep and serious, and I am thankful if my speech and manner bear reasonable proportion to my thoughts.'

'It must be so,' said the lady; 'yet the change seems a rapid and strange one. It seems to be as if a childish girl had at once shot up into a deep-thinking and impassioned woman, ready to make exertions alike and sacrifices with all that vain devotion to a favourite object of affection which is often so basely rewarded.'

The Lady Hermione sighed bitterly, and Monna Paula entered ere the conversation proceeded farther. She spoke to her mistress in the foreign language in which they frequently conversed, but which was unknown to Margaret.

'We must have patience for a time,' said the lady to her visitor; 'the cash-keeper is abroad on some business, but he is expected home in the course of half an hour.'

Margaret wrung her hands in vexation and impatience.

'Minutes are precious,' continued the lady; 'that I am well aware of; and we will at least suffer none of them to escape us. Monna Paula shall remain below and transact our business the very instant that Roberts returns home.'

She spoke to her attendant accordingly, who again left the room.

'You are very kind, madam — very good,' said the poor little Margaret, while the anxious trembling of her lip and of her hand showed all that sickening agitation of the heart which arises from hope deferred.

'Be patient, Margaret, and collect yourself,' said the lady; 'you may — you must, have much to do to carry through this your bold purpose. Reserve your spirits, which you may need so much; be patient, it is the only remedy against the evils of life.'

'Yes, madam,' said Margaret, wiping her eyes, and endeavouring in vain to suppress the natural impatience of her temper, 'I have heard so — very often indeed; and I daresay I have myself, Heaven forgive me, said so to people in perplexity and affliction; but it was before I had suffered perplexity and vexation myself, and I am sure I will never preach patience to any human being again, now that I know how much the medicine goes against the stomach.'

'You will think better of it, maiden,' said the Lady Hermione. 'I also, when I first felt distress, thought they did me wrong who spoke to me of patience; but my sorrows have been repeated and continued till I have been taught to cling to it as the best, and — religious duties excepted, of which, indeed, patience forms a part — the only, alleviation which life can afford them.'

Margaret, who neither wanted sense nor feeling, wiped her tears hastily, and asked her patroness's forgiveness for her petulance.

'I might have thought,' she said — 'I ought to have reflected, that even from the manner of your life, madam, it is plain you must have suffered sorrow; and yet, God knows, the patience which I have ever seen you display well entitles you to recommend your own example to others.'

The lady was silent for a moment, and then replied —

'Margaret, I am about to repose a high confidence in you. You are no longer a child, but a thinking and a feeling woman. You have told me as much of your secret as you dared; I will let you know as much of mine as I may venture to tell. You will ask me, perhaps, why, at a moment when your own mind is agitated, I should force upon you the consideration of my sorrows? and I answer, that I cannot withstand the impulse which now induces me to do so. Perhaps, from having witnessed, for the first time these three years, the natural effects of human passion, my own sorrows have been awakened, and are for the moment too big for my own bosom; perhaps I may hope that you, who seem driving full sail on the very rock on which I was wrecked for ever, will take warning by the tale I have to tell. Enough, if you are willing to listen, I am willing to tell you who the melancholy inhabitant of the Foljambe apartments really is, and why she resides here. It will serve, at least, to while away the time until Monna Paula shall bring us the reply from Roberts.'

At any other moment of her life Margaret Ramsay would have heard with undivided interest a communication so flattering in itself, and referring to a subject upon which the general curiosity had been so strongly excited. And even at this agitating moment, although she ceased not to listen with an anxious ear and throbbing heart for the sound of Monna Paula's returning footsteps, she nevertheless, as gratitude and policy, as well as a portion of curiosity, dictated, composed herself, in appearance at least, to the strictest attention to the Lady Her-

mione, and thanked her with humility for the high confidence she was pleased to repose in her. The Lady Hermione with the same calmness which always attended her speech and actions, thus recounted her story to her young friend :

‘My father,’ she said, ‘was a merchant, but he was of a city whose merchants are princes. I am the daughter of a noble house in Genoa, whose name stood as high in honour and in antiquity as any inscribed in the Golden Register of that famous aristocracy.

‘My mother was a noble Scottishwoman. She was descended — do not start — and not remotely descended, of the house of Glenvarloch ; no wonder that I was easily led to take concern in the misfortunes of this young lord. He is my near relation, and my mother, who was more than sufficiently proud of her descent, early taught me to take an interest in the name. My maternal grandfather, a cadet of that house of Glenvarloch, had followed the fortunes of an unhappy fugitive, Francis Earl of Bothwell,¹ who, after showing his miseries in many a foreign court, at length settled in Spain upon a miserable pension, which he earned by conforming to the Catholic faith. Ralph Olifaunt, my grandfather, separated from him in disgust, and settled at Barcelona, where, by the friendship of the governor, his heresy, as it was termed, was connived at. My father, in the course of his commerce, resided more at Barcelona than in his native country, though at times he visited Genoa.

‘It was at Barcelona that he became acquainted with my mother, loved her, and married her ; they differed in faith, but they agreed in affection. I was their only child. In public I conformed to the doctrines and ceremonial of the Church of Rome ; but my mother, by whom these were regarded with horror, privately trained me up in those of the Reformed religion ; and my father, either indifferent in the matter or unwilling to distress the woman whom he loved, overlooked or connived at my secretly joining in her devotions.

‘But when, unhappily, my father was attacked, while yet in the prime of life, by a slow wasting disease, which he felt to be incurable, he foresaw the hazard to which his widow and orphan might be exposed, after he was no more, in a country so bigoted to Catholicism as Spain. He made it his business, during the last two years of his life, to realise and to remit to England a large part of his fortune, which, by the faith and honour of his correspondent, the excellent man under whose roof I now reside,

¹ See Note 26.

was employed to great advantage. Had my father lived to complete his purpose, by withdrawing his whole fortune from commerce, he himself would have accompanied us to England, and would have beheld us settled in peace and honour before his death. But Heaven had ordained it otherwise. He died, leaving several sums engaged in the hands of his Spanish debtors; and, in particular, he had made a large and extensive consignment to a certain wealthy society of merchants at Madrid, who showed no willingness after his death to account for the proceeds. Would to God we had left these covetous and wicked men in possession of their booty, for such they seemed to hold the property of their deceased correspondent and friend! We had enough for comfort, and even splendour, already secured in England; but friends exclaimed upon the folly of permitting these unprincipled men to plunder us of our rightful property. The sum itself was large, and the claim having been made, my mother thought that my father's memory was interested in its being enforced, especially as the defences set up for the mercantile society went, in some degree, to impeach the fairness of his transactions.

'We went therefore to Madrid. I was then, my Margaret, about your age, young and thoughtless, as you have hitherto been. We went, I say, to Madrid, to solicit the protection of the court and of the king, without which we were told it would be in vain to expect justice against an opulent and powerful association.

'Our residence at the Spanish metropolis drew on from weeks to months. For my part, my natural sorrow for a kind, though not a fond, father having abated, I cared not if the lawsuit had detained us at Madrid for ever. My mother permitted herself and me rather more liberty than we had been accustomed to. She found relations among the Scottish and Irish officers, many of whom held a high rank in the Spanish armies; their wives and daughters became our friends and companions, and I had perpetual occasion to exercise my mother's native language, which I had learned from my infancy. By degrees, as my mother's spirits were low and her health indifferent, she was induced, by her partial fondness for me, to suffer me to mingle occasionally in society which she herself did not frequent, under the guardianship of such ladies as she imagined she could trust, and particularly under the care of the lady of a general officer, whose weakness or falsehood was the original cause of my misfortunes. I was as gay, Margaret, and thoughtless — I again

repeat it—as you were but lately, and my attention, like yours, became suddenly riveted to one object, and to one set of feelings.

‘The person by whom they were excited was young, noble, handsome, accomplished, a soldier, and a Briton. So far our cases are nearly parallel; but, may Heaven forbid that the parallel should become complete! This man, so noble, so fairly formed, so gifted, and so brave—this *villain*, for that, Margaret, was his fittest name—spoke of love to me, and I listened. Could I suspect his sincerity? If he was wealthy, noble, and long-descended, I also was a noble and an opulent heiress. It is true, that he neither knew the extent of my father’s wealth, nor did I communicate to him—I do not even remember if I myself knew it at the time—the important circumstance, that the greater part of that wealth was beyond the grasp of arbitrary power, and not subject to the precarious award of arbitrary judges. My lover might think, perhaps, as my mother was desirous the world at large should believe, that almost our whole fortune depended on the precarious suit which we had come to Madrid to prosecute—a belief which she had countenanced out of policy, being well aware that a knowledge of my father’s having remitted such a large part of his fortune to England would in no shape aid the recovery of further sums in the Spanish courts. Yet, with no more extensive views of my fortune than were possessed by the public, I believe that he of whom I am speaking was at first sincere in his pretensions. He had himself interest sufficient to have obtained a decision in our favour in the courts, and my fortune, reckoning only what was in Spain, would then have been no inconsiderable sum. To be brief, whatever might be his motives or temptation for so far committing himself, he applied to my mother for my hand, with my consent and approval. My mother’s judgment had become weaker, but her passions had become more irritable, during her increasing illness.

‘You have heard of the bitterness of the ancient Scottish feuds, of which it may be said, in the language of Scripture, that the fathers eat sour grapes, and the teeth of the children are set on edge. Unhappily—I should say *happily*, considering what this man has now shown himself to be—some such strain of bitterness had divided his house from my mother’s, and she had succeeded to the inheritance of hatred. When he asked her for my hand, she was no longer able to command her passions: she raked up every injury which the rival families had inflicted

upon each other during a bloody feud of two centuries, heaped him with epithets of scorn, and rejected his proposal of alliance as if it had come from the basest of mankind.

‘My lover retired in passion; and I remained to weep and murmur against fortune, and — I will confess my fault — against my affectionate parent. I had been educated with different feelings, and the traditions of the feuds and quarrels of my mother’s family in Scotland, which were to her monuments and chronicles, seemed to me as insignificant and unmeaning as the actions and fantasies of Don Quixote; and I blamed my mother bitterly for sacrificing my happiness to an empty dream of family dignity.

‘While I was in this humour, my lover sought a renewal of our intercourse. We met repeatedly in the house of the lady whom I have mentioned, and who, in levity or in the spirit of intrigue, countenanced our secret correspondence. At length we were secretly married; so far did my blinded passion hurry me. My lover had secured the assistance of a clergyman of the English Church. Monna Paula, who had been my attendant from infancy, was one witness of our union. Let me do the faithful creature justice. She conjured me to suspend my purpose till my mother’s death should permit us to celebrate our marriage openly; but the entreaties of my lover, and my own wayward passion, prevailed over her remonstrances. The lady I have spoken of was another witness, but whether she was in full possession of my bridegroom’s secret I had never the means to learn. But the shelter of her name and roof afforded us the means of frequently meeting, and the love of my husband seemed as sincere and as unbounded as my own.

‘He was eager, he said, to gratify his pride by introducing me to one or two of his noble English friends. This could not be done at Lady D——’s; but by his command, which I was now entitled to consider as my law, I contrived twice to visit him at his own hotel, accompanied only by Monna Paula. There was a very small party of two ladies and two gentlemen. There was music, mirth, and dancing. I had heard of the frankness of the English nation, but I could not help thinking it bordered on license during these entertainments, and in the course of the collation which followed; but I imputed my scruples to my inexperience, and would not doubt the propriety of what was approved by my husband.

‘I was soon summoned to other scenes. My poor mother’s

disease drew to a conclusion. Happy I am that it took place before she discovered what would have cut her to the soul.

‘In Spain you may have heard how the Catholic priests, and particularly the monks, besiege the beds of the dying, to obtain bequests for the good of the church. I have said that my mother’s temper was irritated by disease, and her judgment impaired in proportion. She gathered spirits and force from the resentment which the priests around her bed excited by their importunity, and the boldness of the stern sect of Reformers to which she had secretly adhered seemed to animate her dying tongue. She avowed the religion she had so long concealed; renounced all hope and aid which did not come by and through its dictates; rejected with contempt the ceremonial of the Romish Church; loaded the astonished priests with reproaches for their greediness and hypocrisy; and commanded them to leave her house. They went in bitterness and rage, but it was to return with the Inquisitorial power, its warrants, and its officers; and they found only the cold corpse left of her on whom they had hoped to work their vengeance. As I was soon discovered to have shared my mother’s heresy, I was dragged from her dead body, imprisoned in a solitary cloister, and treated with severity, which the abbess assured me was due to the looseness of my life, as well as my spiritual errors. I avowed my marriage, to justify the situation in which I found myself. I implored the assistance of the superior to communicate my situation to my husband. She smiled coldly at the proposal, and told me the church had provided a better spouse for me; advised me to secure myself of Divine grace hereafter, and deserve milder treatment here, by presently taking the veil. In order to convince me that I had no other resource, she showed me a royal decree, by which all my estate was hypothecated to the convent of St. Magdalen, and became their complete property upon my death or my taking the vows. As I was, both from religious principle and affectionate attachment to my husband, absolutely immovable in my rejection of the veil, I believe — may Heaven forgive me if I wrong her! — that the abbess was desirous to make sure of my spoils by hastening the former event.

‘It was a small and a poor convent, and situated among the mountains of Guadarrama. Some of the sisters were the daughters of neighbouring hidalgos, as poor as they were proud and ignorant; others were women immured there on account of their vicious conduct. The superior herself was of

a high family, to which she owed her situation ; but she was said to have disgraced her connexions by her conduct during youth, and now, in advanced age, covetousness and the love of power, a spirit of severity and cruelty, had succeeded to the thirst after licentious pleasure. I suffered much under this woman ; and still her dark, glassy eye, her tall, shrouded form, and her rigid features, haunt my slumbers.

‘I was not destined to be a mother. I was very ill, and my recovery was long doubtful. The most violent remedies were applied, if remedies they indeed were. My health was restored at length, against my own expectation and that of all around me. But when I first again beheld the reflection of my own face, I thought it was the visage of a ghost. I was wont to be flattered by all, but particularly by my husband, for the fineness of my complexion ; it was now totally gone, and, what is more extraordinary, it has never returned. I have observed that the few who now see me look upon me as a bloodless phantom. Such has been the abiding effect of the treatment to which I was subjected. May God forgive those who were the agents of it ! I thank Heaven, I can say so with as sincere a wish as that with which I pray for forgiveness of my own sins. They now relented somewhat towards me — moved, perhaps, to compassion by my singular appearance, which bore witness to my sufferings ; or afraid that the matter might attract attention during a visitation of the bishop which was approaching. One day, as I was walking in the convent garden, to which I had been lately admitted, a miserable old Moorish slave, who was kept to cultivate the little spot, muttered as I passed him, but still keeping his wrinkled face and decrepit form in the same angle with the earth, “There is heart’s-ease near the postern.”

‘I knew something of the symbolical language of flowers, once carried to such perfection among the Moriscoes of Spain ; but if I had been ignorant of it, the captive would soon have caught at any hint that seemed to promise liberty. With all the haste consistent with the utmost circumspection, for I might be observed by the abbess or some of the sisters from the window, I hastened to the postern. It was closely barred as usual ; but when I coughed slightly I was answered from the other side, and, O Heaven ! it was my husband’s voice which said, “Lose not a moment here at present, but be on this spot when the vesper bell has tolled.”

‘I retired in an ecstasy of joy. I was not entitled or per-

mitted to assist at vespers, but was accustomed to be confined to my cell while the nuns were in the choir. Since my recovery, they had discontinued locking the door, though the utmost severity was denounced against me if I left these precincts. But, let the penalty be what it would, I hastened to dare it. No sooner had the last toll of the vesper bell ceased to sound than I stole from my chamber, reached the garden unobserved, hurried to the postern, beheld it open with rapture, and in the next moment was in my husband's arms. He had with him another cavalier of noble mien; both were masked and armed. Their horses, with one saddled for my use, stood in a thicket hard by, with two other masked horsemen, who seemed to be servants. In less than two minutes we were mounted, and rode off as fast as we could through rough and devious roads, in which one of the domestics appeared to act as guide.

'The hurried pace at which we rode, and the anxiety of the moment, kept me silent, and prevented my expressing my surprise or my joy save in a few broken words. It also served as an apology for my husband's silence. At length we stopped at a solitary hut, the cavaliers dismounted, and I was assisted from my saddle, not by M—— M——, my husband, I would say, who seemed busied about his horse, but by the stranger.

"Go into the hut," said my husband, "change your dress with the speed of lightning; you will find one to assist you; we must forward instantly when you have shifted your apparel."

'I entered the hut, and was received in the arms of the faithful Monna Paula, who had waited my arrival for many hours, half distracted with fear and anxiety. With her assistance I speedily tore off the detested garments of the convent, and exchanged them for a travelling-suit made after the English fashion. I observed that Monna Paula was in a similar dress. I had but just huddled on my change of attire, when we were hastily summoned to mount. A horse, I found, was provided for Monna Paula, and we resumed our route. On the way, my convent garb, which had been wrapped hastily together round a stone, was thrown into a lake, along the verge of which we were then passing. The two cavaliers rode together in front, my attendant and I followed, and the servants brought up the rear. Monna Paula, as we rode on, repeatedly entreated me to be silent upon the road, as our lives depended on it. I was easily reconciled to be passive, for, the first fever of spirits

which attended the sense of liberation and of gratified affection having passed away, I felt as it were dizzy with the rapid motion; and my utmost exertion was necessary to keep my place on the saddle, until we suddenly — it was now very dark — saw a strong light before us.

‘My husband reined up his horse, and gave a signal by a low whistle twice repeated, which was answered from a distance. The whole party then halted under the boughs of a large cork-tree, and my husband, drawing himself close to my side, said, in a voice which I then thought was only embarrassed by fear for my safety — “We must now part. Those to whom I commit you are *contrabandists*, who only know you as Englishwomen, but who, for a high bribe, have undertaken to escort you through the passes of the Pyrenees as far as St. Jean de Luz.”

“And do *you* not go with us?” I exclaimed with emphasis, though in a whisper.

“It is impossible,” he said, “and would ruin all. See that you speak in English in these people’s hearing, and give not the least sign of understanding what they say in Spanish — your life depends on it; for though they live in opposition to, and evasion of, the laws of Spain, they would tremble at the idea of violating those of the church. I see them coming — farewell — farewell.”

‘The last words were hastily uttered. I endeavoured to detain him yet a moment by my feeble grasp on his cloak.

“You will meet me then, I trust, at St. Jean de Luz.”

“Yes — yes,” he answered hastily, “at St. Jean de Luz you will meet your protector.”

He then extricated his cloak from my grasp, and was lost in the darkness. His companion approached, kissed my hand, which in the agony of the moment I was scarce sensible of, and followed my husband, attended by one of the domestics.’

The tears of Hermione here flowed so fast as to threaten the interruption of her narrative. When she resumed it, it was with a kind of apology to Margaret.

‘Every circumstance,’ she said, ‘occurring in these moments, when I still enjoyed a delusive idea of happiness, is deeply imprinted in my remembrance, which, respecting all that has since happened, is waste and unvaried as an Arabian desert. But I have no right to inflict on you, Margaret, agitated as you are with your own anxieties, the unavailing details of my useless recollections.’

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while we heard them grumbling to each other against our effeminacy — like some rude carrier, who, in charge of a package of valuable and fragile ware, takes every precaution for its preservation, while he curses the unwonted trouble which it occasions him. Once or twice, when they were disappointed in their contraband traffic, lost some goods in a rencontre with the Spanish officers of the revenue, and were finally pursued by a military force, their murmurs assumed a more alarming tone in the terrified ears of my attendant and myself, when, without daring to seem to understand them, we heard them curse the insular heretics, on whose account God, St. James, and Our Lady of the Pillar had blighted their hopes of profit. These are dreadful recollections, Margaret.'

'Why, then, dearest lady,' answered Margaret, 'will you thus dwell on them?'

'It is only,' said the Lady Hermione, 'because I linger like a criminal on the scaffold, and would fain protract the time that must inevitably bring on the final catastrophe. Yes, dearest Margaret, I rest and dwell on the events of that journey, marked as it was by fatigue and danger, though the road lay through the wildest and most desolate deserts and mountains, and though our companions, both men and women, were fierce and lawless themselves, and exposed to the most merciless retaliation from those with whom they were constantly engaged — yet would I rather dwell on these hazardous events than tell that which awaited me at St. Jean de Luz.'

'But you arrived there in safety?' said Margaret.

'Yes, maiden,' replied the Lady Hermione; 'and were guided by the chief of our outlawed band to the house which had been assigned for our reception, with the same punctilious accuracy with which he would have delivered a bale of uncustomed goods to a correspondent. I was told a gentleman had expected me for two days; I rushed into the apartment, and, when I expected to embrace my husband — I found myself in the arms of his friend!'

'The villain!' exclaimed Margaret, whose anxiety had, in spite of herself, been a moment suspended by the narrative of the lady.

'Yes,' replied Hermione, calmly, though her voice somewhat faltered, 'it is the name that best — that well befits him. He, Margaret, for whom I had sacrificed all — whose love and whose memory were dearer to me than my freedom, when I was in the convent — than my life, when I was on my perilous journey

Margaret's eyes were full of tears ; it was impossible it could be otherwise, considering that the tale was told by her suffering benefactress, and resembled in some respects her own situation ; and yet she must not be severely blamed if, while eagerly pressing her patroness to continue her narrative, her eye involuntarily sought the door, as if to chide the delay of Monna Paula.

The Lady Hermione saw and forgave these conflicting emotions ; and she too must be pardoned if, in her turn, the minute detail of her narrative showed that, in the discharge of feelings so long locked in her own bosom, she rather forgot those which were personal to her auditor, and by which it must be supposed Margaret's mind was principally occupied, if not entirely engrossed.

'I told you, I think, that one domestic followed the gentlemen,' thus the lady continued her story ; 'the other remained with us for the purpose, as it seemed, of introducing us to two persons whom M——, I say, whom my husband's signal had brought to the spot. A word or two of explanation passed between them and the servant, in a sort of *patois* which I did not understand ; and one of the strangers taking hold of my bridle, the other of Monna Paula's, they led us towards the light, which I have already said was the signal of our halting. I touched Monna Paula, and was sensible that she trembled very much, which surprised me, because I knew her character to be so strong and bold as to border upon the masculine.

'When we reached the fire, the gipsy figures of those who surrounded it, with their swarthy features, large sombrero hats, girdles stuck full of pistols and poniards, and all the other apparatus of a roving and perilous life, would have terrified me at another moment. But then I only felt the agony of having parted from my husband almost in the very moment of my rescue. The females of the gang — for there were four or five women amongst these contraband traders — received us with a sort of rude courtesy. They were, in dress and manners, not extremely different from the men with whom they associated — were almost as hardy and adventurous, carried arms like them, and were, as we learned from passing circumstances, scarcely less experienced in the use of them.

'It was impossible not to fear these wild people ; yet they gave us no reason to complain of them, but used us on all occasions with a kind of clumsy courtesy, accommodating themselves to our wants and our weakness during the journey, even

The Lady Hermione took the bag of gold from her attendant and gave it to her young friend, who threw herself into her arms, kissed her on both the pale cheeks, over which the sorrows so newly awakened by her narrative had drawn many tears, then sprung up, wiped her own overflowing eyes, and left the Foljambe apartments with a hasty and resolved step.

CHAPTER XXI

Rove not from pole to pole. The man lives here
Whose razor's only equall'd by his beer ;
And where, in either sense, the cockney put
May, if he pleases, get confounded cut.

On the Sign of an Alehouse kept by a Barber.

WE are under the necessity of transporting our readers to the habitation of Benjamin Suddlechop, the husband of the active and efficient Dame Ursula, and who also, in his own person, discharged more offices than one. For, besides trimming locks and beards, and turning whiskers upward into the martial and swaggering curl, or downward into the drooping form which became mustachios of civil policy ; besides also occasionally letting blood, either by cupping or by the lancet, extracting a stump, and performing other actions of petty pharmacy, very nearly as well as his neighbour Raredrench, the apothecary, he could, on occasion, draw a cup of beer as well as a tooth, tap a hogshead as well as a vein, and wash, with a draught of good ale, the mustachios which his art had just trimmed. But he carried on these trades apart from each other. His barber's shop projected its long and mysterious pole into Fleet Street, painted party-coloured-wise, to represent the ribbons with which, in elder times, that ensign was garnished. In the window were seen rows of teeth displayed upon strings like rosaries ; cups with a red rag at the bottom, to resemble blood — an intimation that patients might be bled, cupped, or blistered, with the assistance of 'sufficient advice' ; while the more profitable, but less honourable, operations upon the hair of the head and beard were briefly and gravely announced. Within was the well-worn leathern chair for customers, the guitar, then called a ghittern or cittern, with which a customer might amuse himself till his predecessor was dismissed from under Benjamin's hands, and which, therefore, often flayed the ears of the patient metaphorically, while his chin sustained from the

razor literal scarification. All, therefore, in this department spoke the chirurgion-barber, or the barber-chirurgion.

But there was a little back room, used as a private tap-room, which had a separate entrance by a dark and crooked alley, which communicated with Fleet Street, after a circuitous passage through several bye lanes and courts. This retired temple of Bacchus had also a connexion with Benjamin's more public shop by a long and narrow entrance, conducting to the secret premises in which a few old toppers used to take their morning-draught, and a few gill-sippers their modicum of strong waters, in a bashful way, after having entered the barber's shop under pretence of being shaved. Besides, this obscure tap-room gave a separate admission to the apartments of Dame Ursley, which she was believed to make use of in the course of her multifarious practice, both to let herself secretly out and to admit clients and employers who cared not to be seen to visit her in public. Accordingly, after the hour of noon, by which time the modest and timid whetters, who were Benjamin's best customers, had each had his draught or his thimbleful, the business of the tap was in a manner ended, and the charge of attending the back door passed from one of the barber's apprentices to the little mulatto girl, the dingy Iris of Dame Suddlechop. Then came mystery thick upon mystery: muffled gallants and masked females, in disguises of different fashions, were seen to glide through the intricate mazes of the alley; and even the low tap on the door, which frequently demanded the attention of the little Creole, had in it something that expressed secrecy and fear of discovery.

It was the evening of the same day when Margaret had held the long conference with the Lady Hermione, that Dame Suddlechop had directed her little portress to 'keep the door fast as a miser's purse-strings; and, as she valued her saffron skin, to let in none but ——' the name she added in a whisper, and accompanied it with a nod. The little domestic blinked intelligence, went to her post, and in brief time thereafter admitted and ushered into the presence of the dame that very city gallant whose clothes sat so awkwardly upon him, and who had behaved so doughtily in the fray which befell at Nigel's first visit to Beaujeu's ordinary. The mulatto introduced him — 'Missis, fine young gentleman, all over gold and velvet' — then muttered to herself as she shut the door, 'Fine young gentleman, he! — apprentice to him who makes the tick-tick.'

It was indeed — we are sorry to say it, and trust our readers will sympathise with the interest we take in the matter — it was indeed honest Jin Vin, who had been so far left to his own devices, and abandoned by his better angel, as occasionally to travesty himself in this fashion, and to visit, in the dress of a gallant of the day, those places of pleasure and dissipation in which it would have been everlasting discredit to him to have been seen in his real character and condition ; that is, had it been possible for him in his proper shape to have gained admission. There was now a deep gloom on his brow, his rich habit was hastily put on, and buttoned awry ; his belt buckled in a most disorderly fashion, so that his sword stuck outwards from his side, instead of hanging by it with graceful negligence ; while his poniard, though fairly hatched and gilded, stuck in his girdle like a butcher's steel in the fold of his blue apron. Persons of fashion had, by the way, the advantage formerly of being better distinguished from the vulgar than at present ; for, what the ancient farthingale and more modern hoop were to court ladies, the sword was to the gentleman — an article of dress which only rendered those ridiculous who assumed it for the nonce, without being in the habit of wearing it. Vincent's rapier got between his legs, and, as he stumbled over it, he exclaimed — 'Zounds ! 'tis the second time it has served me thus. I believe the damned trinket knows I am no true gentleman, and does it of set purpose.'

'Come — come, mine honest Jin Vin — come, my good boy,' said the dame, in a soothing tone, 'never mind these trankums ; a frank and hearty London 'prentice is worth all the gallants of the inns of court.'

'*I was* a frank and hearty London 'prentice before I knew you, Dame Suddlechop,' said Vincent. 'What your advice has made me, you may find a name for ; since, fore George, I am ashamed to think about it myself.'

'A-well-a-day,' quoth the dame, 'and is it even so with thee ? — nay, then, I know but one cure' ; and with that, going to a little corner cupboard of carved wainscot, she opened it by the assistance of a key which, with half a dozen besides, hung in a silver chain at her girdle, and produced a long flask of thin glass cased with wicker, bringing forth at the same time two Flemish rummer glasses, with long stalks and capacious wombs. She filled the one brimful for her guest, and the other more modestly to about two-thirds of its capacity for her own use, repeating, as the rich cordial trickled forth in a smooth oily

stream — 'Right *rosa solis*, as ever washed mulligrubs out of a moody brain!'

But, though Jin Vin tossed off his glass without scruple, while the lady sipped hers more moderately, it did not appear to produce the expected amendment upon his humour. On the contrary, as he threw himself into the great leathern chair in which Dame Ursley was wont to solace herself of an evening, he declared himself 'the most miserable dog within the sound of Bow Bell.'

'And why should you be so idle as to think yourself so, silly boy?' said Dame Suddlechop; 'but 'tis always thus: fools and children never know when they are well. Why, there is not one that walks in St. Paul's, whether in flat cap or hat and feather, that has so many kind glances from the wenches as you, when ye swagger along Fleet Street with your bat under your arm, and your cap set aside upon your head. Thou knowest well that, from Mrs. Deputy's self down to the waistcoateers in the alley, all of them are twiring and peeping betwixt their fingers when you pass; and yet you call yourself a miserable dog! and I must tell you all this over and over again, as if I were whistling the chimes of London to a pettish child, in order to bring the pretty baby into good-humour!'

The flattery of Dame Ursula seemed to have the fate of her cordial: it was swallowed, indeed, by the party to whom she presented it, and that with some degree of relish, but it did not operate as a sedative on the disturbed state of the youth's mind. He laughed for an instant, half in scorn and half in gratified vanity, but cast a sullen look on Dame Ursley as he replied to her last words —

'You do treat me like a child indeed, when you sing over and over to me a cuckoo song that I care not a copper-filing for.'

'Aha!' said Dame Ursley; 'that is to say, you care not if you please all, unless you please one. You are a true lover, I warrant, and care not for all the city, from here to Whitechapel, so you could write yourself first in your pretty Peg-a-Ramsay's good-will. Well — well, take patience, man, and be guided by me, for I will be the hoop will bind you together at last.'

'It is time you were so,' said Jenkin, 'for hitherto you have rather been the wedge to separate us.'

Dame Suddlechop had by this time finished her cordial; it was not the first she had taken that day, and, though a woman of strong brain, and cautious at least, if not abstemious, in her

potations, it may nevertheless be supposed that her patience was not improved by the regimen which she observed.

'Why, thou ungracious and ingrate knave,' said Dame Ursley, 'have I not done everything to put thee in thy mistress's good graces? She loves gentry, the proud Scottish minx, as a Welshman loves cheese, and has her father's descent from that Duke of Daldevil, or whatsoever she calls him, as close in her heart as gold in a miser's chest, though she as seldom shows it; and none she will think of, or have, but a gentleman; and a gentleman I have made of thee, Jin Vin, the devil cannot deny that.'

'You have made a fool of me,' said poor Jenkin, looking at the sleeve of his jacket.

'Never the worse gentleman for that,' said Dame Ursley, laughing.

'And what is worse,' said he, turning his back to her suddenly, and writhing in his chair, 'you have made a rogue of me.'

'Never the worse gentleman for that neither,' said Dame Ursley, in the same tone; 'let a man bear his folly gaily and his knavery stoutly, and let me see if gravity or honesty will look him in the face nowadays. Tut, man, it was only in the time of King Arthur or King Lud that a gentleman was held to blemish his scutcheon by a leap over the line of reason or honesty. It is the bold look, the ready hand, the fine clothes, the brisk oath, and the wild brain that makes the gallant nowadays.'

'I know what you have made me,' said Jin Vin; 'since I have given up skittles and trap-ball for tennis and bowls, good English ale for thin Bordeaux and sour Rhenish, roast-beef and pudding for woodcocks and kickshaws, my bat for a sword, my cap for a beaver, my "forsooth" for a modish oath, my Christmas-box for a dice-box, my religion for the devil's matins, and mine honest name for —— Woman, I could brain thee, when I think whose advice has guided me in all this!'

'Whose advice, then? — whose advice, then? Speak out, thou poor, petty cloak-brusher, and say who advised thee!' retorted Dame Ursley, flushed and indignant. 'Marry come up, my paltry companion; say by whose advice you have made a gamester of yourself, and a thief besides, as your words would bear — the Lord deliver us from evil!' And here Dame Ursley devoutly crossed herself.

'Hark ye, Dame Ursley Suddlechop,' said Jenkin, starting up, his dark eyes flashing with anger; 'remember I am none

of your husband ; and, if I were, you would do well not to forget whose threshold was swept when they last rode the Skimmington¹ upon such another scolding jade as yourself.'

'I hope to see you ride up Holborn next,' said Dame Ursley, provoked out of all her holiday and sugar-plum expressions, 'with a nosegay at your breast and a parson at your elbow !'

'That may well be,' answered Jin Vin, bitterly, 'if I walk by your counsels as I have begun by them ; but, before that day comes, you shall know that Jin Vin has the brisk boys of Fleet Street still at his wink. Yes, you jade, you shall be carted for bawd and conjurer, double-dyed in grain, and bing off to Bridewell, with every brass basin betwixt the Bar and Paul's beating before you, as if the devil were banging them with his beef-hook.'

Dame Ursley coloured like scarlet, seized upon the half-emptied flask of cordial, and seemed, by her first gesture, about to hurl it at the head of her adversary ; but suddenly, and as if by a strong internal effort, she checked her outrageous resentment, and, putting the bottle to its more legitimate use, filled, with wonderful composure, the two glasses, and, taking up of one them, said, with a smile, which better became her comely and jovial countenance than the fury by which it was animated the moment before —

'Here is to thee, Jin Vin, my lad, in all loving-kindness, whatever spite thou bearest to me, that have always been a mother to thee.'

Jenkin's English good-nature could not resist this forcible appeal ; he took up the other glass, and lovingly pledged the dame in her cup of reconciliation, and proceeded to make a kind of grumbling apology for his own violence.

'For you know,' he said, 'it was you persuaded me to get these fine things, and go to that godless ordinary, and ruffle it with the best, and bring you home all the news ; and you said I, that was the cock of the ward, would soon be the cock of the ordinary, and would win ten times as much at gleek and primero as I used to do at put and beggar-my-neighbour, and turn up doublets with the dice as busily as I was wont to trowl down the ninepins in the skittle-ground ; and then you said I should bring you such news out of the ordinary as should make us all, when used as you knew how to use it ; and now you see what is to come of it all !'

'Tis all true thou sayest, lad,' said the dame ; 'but thou

¹ See Note 27.

must have patience. Rome was not built in a day. You cannot become used to your court suit in a month's time, any more than when you changed your long coat for a doublet and hose; and in gaming you must expect to lose as well as gain; 'tis the sitting gamester sweeps the board.'

'The board has swept me, I know,' replied Jin Vin, 'and that pretty clean out. I would that were the worst; but I owe for all this finery, and settling-day is coming on, and my master will find my account worse than it should be by a score of pieces. My old father will be called in to make them good; and I — may save the hangman a labour and do the job myself, or go the Virginia voyage.'

'Do not speak so loud, my dear boy,' said Dame Ursley; 'but tell me why you borrow not from a friend to make up your arrear. You could lend him as much when his settling-day came around.'

'No — no, I have had enough of that work,' said Vincent. 'Tunstall would lend me the money, poor fellow, an he had it; but his gentle, beggarly kindred plunder him of all, and keep him as bare as a birch at Christmas. No — my fortune may be spelt in four letters, and these read, RUIN.'

'Now hush, you simple craven,' said the dame; 'did you never hear that when the need is highest the help is nighest? We may find aid for you yet, and sooner than you are aware of. I am sure I would never have advised you to such a course, but only you had set heart and eye on pretty Mistress Marget, and less would not serve you; and what could I do but advise you to cast your city slough, and try your luck where folks find fortune?'

'Ay — ay, I remember your counsel well,' said Jenkin; 'I was to be introduced to her by you when I was perfect in my gallantries, and as rich as the king; and then she was to be surprised to find I was poor Jin Vin, that used to watch, from matin to curfew, for one glance of her eye; and now, instead of that, she has set her soul on this Scottish sparrow-hawk of a lord that won my last tester, and be cursed to him; and so I am bankrupt in love, fortune, and character, before I am out of my time, and all along of you, Mother Midnight.'

'Do not call me out of my own name, my dear boy, Jin Vin,' answered Ursula, in a tone betwixt rage and coaxing — 'do not; because I am no saint, but a poor sinful woman, with no more patience than she needs to carry her through a thousand crosses. And if I have done you wrong by evil

counsel, I must mend it, and put you right by good advice. And for the score of pieces that must be made up at settling-day, why, here is, in a good green purse, as much as will make that matter good; and we will get old Crosspatch, the tailor, to take a long day for your clothes; and——

'Mother, are you serious?' said Jin Vin, unable to trust either his eyes or his ears.

'In troth am I,' said the dame; 'and will you call me Mother Midnight now, Jin Vin?'

'Mother Midnight!' exclaimed Jenkin, hugging the dame in his transport, and bestowing on her still comely cheek a hearty and not unacceptable smack, that sounded like the report of a pistol — 'Mother Midday, rather, that has risen to light me out of my troubles — a mother more dear than she who bore me; for she, poor soul, only brought me into a world of sin and sorrow, and your timely aid has helped me out of the one and the other.' And the good-natured fellow threw himself back in his chair, and fairly drew his hand across his eyes.

'You would not have me be made to ride the Skimmington then,' said the dame; 'or parade me in a cart, with all the brass basins of the ward beating the march to Bridewell before me?'

'I would sooner be carted to Tyburn myself,' replied the penitent.

'Why, then, sit up like a man and wipe thine eyes; and, if thou art pleased with what I have done, I will show thee how thou mayest requite me in the highest degree.'

'How?' said Jenkin Vincent, sitting straight up in his chair. 'You would have me, then, do you some service for this friendship of yours?'

'Ay, marry would I,' said Dame Ursley; 'for you are to know that, though I am right glad to stead you with it, this gold is not mine, but was placed in my hands in order to find a trusty agent for a certain purpose; and so—— But what's the matter with you? are you fool enough to be angry because you cannot get a purse of gold for nothing? I would I knew where such were to come by. I never could find them lying in my road, I promise you.'

'No — no, dame,' said poor Jenkin, 'it is not for that; for, look you, I would rather work these ten bones to the knuckles, and live by my labour; but——' and here he paused.

'But what, man?' said Dame Ursley. 'You are willing

to work for what you want; and yet, when I offer you gold for the winning, you look on me as the devil looks over Lincoln.'

'It is ill talking of the devil, mother,' said Jenkin. 'I had him even now in my head; for, look you, I am at that pass when they say he will appear to wretched, ruined creatures and proffer them gold for the fee-simple of their salvation. But I have been trying these two days to bring my mind strongly up to the thought that I will rather sit down in shame, and sin, and sorrow, as I am like to do, than hold on ill courses to get rid of my present straits; and so take care, Dame Ursula, how you tempt me to break such a good resolution.'

'I tempt you to nothing, young man,' answered Ursula; 'and, as I perceive you are too wilful to be wise, I will e'en put my purse in my pocket and look out for some one that will work my turn with better will and more thankfulness. And you may go your own course: break your indenture, ruin your father, lose your character, and bid pretty Mistress Margaret farewell for ever and a day.'

'Stay — stay,' said Jenkin; 'the woman is in as great a hurry as a brown baker when his oven is overheated. First, let me hear that which you have to propose to me.'

'Why, after all, it is but to get a gentleman of rank and fortune, who is in trouble, carried in secret down the river as far as the Isle of Dogs, or somewhere thereabout, where he may lie concealed until he can escape abroad. I know thou knowest every place by the river's side as well as the devil knows an usurer or the beggar knows his dish.'

'A plague of your similes, dame,' replied the apprentice; 'for the devil gave me that knowledge, and beggary may be the end on't. But what has this gentleman done, that he should need to be under hiding? No Papist, I hope — no Catesby and Piercy business — no Gunpowder Plot?'

'Fie — fie! what do you take me for?' said Dame Ursula. 'I am as good a churchwoman as the parson's wife, save that necessary business will not allow me to go there oftener than on Christmas Day, Heaven help me! No — no, this is no Popish matter. The gentleman hath but struck another in the Park —'

'Ha! what?' said Vincent, interrupting her with a start.

'Ay — ay, I see you guess whom I mean. It is even he we have spoken of so often — just Lord Glenvarloch, and no one else.'

Vincent sprung from his seat, and traversed the room with rapid and disorderly steps.

'There — there it is now : you are always ice or gunpowder. You sit in the great leathern arm-chair as quiet as a rocket hangs upon the frame in a rejoicing-night till the match be fired, and then, whizz ! you are in the third heaven, beyond the reach of the human voice, eye, or brain. When you have wearied yourself with paddling to and fro across the room, will you tell me your determination, for time presses ? Will you aid me in this matter or not ?'

'No — no — no — a thousand times no,' replied Jenkin. 'Have you not confessed to me that Margaret loves him ?'

'Ay,' answered the dame, 'that she thinks she does ; but that will not last long.'

'And have I not told you but this instant,' replied Jenkin, 'that it was this same Glenvarloch that rooked me, at the ordinary, of every penny I had, and made a knave of me to boot, by gaining more than was my own ? O that cursed gold, which Shortyard, the mercer, paid me that morning on account, for mending the clock of St. Stephen's ! If I had not, by ill chance, had that about me, I could but have beggared my purse, without blemishing my honesty ; and, after I had been rooked of all the rest amongst them, I must needs risk the last five pieces with that shark among the minnows !'

'Granted,' said Dame Ursula. 'All this I know ; and I own that, as Lord Glenvarloch was the last you played with, you have a right to charge your ruin on his head. Moreover, I admit, as already said, that Margaret has made him your rival. Yet surely, now he is in danger to lose his hand, it is not a time to remember all this ?'

'By my faith, but it is, though,' said the young citizen. 'Lose his hand, indeed ! They may take his head, for what I care. Head and hand have made me a miserable wretch !'

'Now, were it not better, my prince of flat-caps,' said Dame Ursula, 'that matters were squared between you ; and that, through means of the same Scottish lord, who has, as you say, deprived you of your money and your mistress, you should in a short time recover both ?'

'And how can your wisdom come to that conclusion, dame ?' said the apprentice. 'My money, indeed, I can conceive — that is, if I comply with your proposal — but my pretty Margaret ! how serving this lord, whom she has set her nonsensical head upon, can do me good with her is far beyond my conception.'

‘That is because, in simple phrase,’ said Dame Ursula, ‘thou knowest no more of a woman’s heart than doth a Norfolk gosling. Look you, man. Were I to report to Mistress Marget that the young lord has miscarried through thy lack of courtesy in refusing to help him, why, then, thou wert odious to her for ever. She will loathe thee as she will loathe the very cook who is to strike off Glenvarloch’s hand with his cleaver; and then she will be yet more fixed in her affections towards this lord. London will hear of nothing but him — speak of nothing but him — think of nothing but him, for three weeks at least, and all that outcry will serve to keep him uppermost in her mind; for nothing pleases a girl so much as to bear relation to any one who is the talk of the whole world around her. Then, if he suffer the sentence of the law, it is a chance if she ever forgets him. I saw that handsome, proper young gentleman, Babington, suffer in the Queen’s time myself, and though I was then but a girl, he was in my head for a year after he was hanged. But, above all, pardoned or punished, Glenvarloch will probably remain in London, and his presence will keep up the silly girl’s nonsensical fancy about him. Whereas, if he escapes —

‘Ay, show me how that is to avail me?’ said Jenkin.

‘If he escapes,’ said the dame, resuming her argument, ‘he must resign the court for years, if not for life; and you know the old saying, “Out of sight, and out of mind.”’

‘True — most true,’ said Jenkin; ‘spoken like an oracle, most wise Ursula.’

‘Ay — ay, I knew you would hear reason at last,’ said the wily dame; ‘and then, when this same lord is off and away for once and for ever, who, I pray you, is to be pretty pet’s confidential person, and who is to fill up the void in her affections? Why, who but thou, thou pearl of ’prentices! And then you will have overcome your own inclinations to comply with hers, and every woman is sensible of that; and you will have run some risk, too, in carrying her desires into effect, and what is it that woman likes better than bravery and devotion to her will? Then you have her secret, and she must treat you with favour and observance, and repose confidence in you, and hold private intercourse with you, till she weeps with one eye for the absent lover whom she is never to see again, and blinks with the other blithely upon him who is in presence; and then if you know not how to improve the relation in which you stand with her, you are not the brisk lively lad that all the world takes you for. Said I well?’

'You have spoken like an empress, most mighty Ursula,' said Jenkin Vincent; 'and your will shall be obeyed.'

'You know Alsatia well?' continued his tutoress.

'Well enough — well enough,' replied he with a nod; 'I have heard the dice rattle there in my day, before I must set up for gentleman, and go among the gallants at the Shavaleer Bojo's, as they call him — the worse rookery of the two, though the feathers are the gayest.'

'And they will have a respect for thee yonder, I warrant?'

'Ay — ay,' replied Vin; 'when I am got into my fustian doublet again, with my bit of a trunnion under my arm, I can walk Alsatia at midnight as I could do that there Fleet Street in mid-day; they will not one of them swagger with the prince of prentices and the king of clubs: they know I could bring every tall boy in the ward down upon them.'

'And you know all the watermen, and so forth?'

'Can converse with every sculler in his own language, from Richmond to Gravesend, and know all the water-cocks from John Taylor, the poet, to little Grigg the Grinner, who never pulls but he shows all his teeth from ear to ear, as if he were grimacing through a horse-collar.'

'And you can take any dress or character upon you well, such as a waterman's, a butcher's, a foot-soldier's,' continued Ursula, 'or the like?'

'Not such a mummer as I am within the walls, and thou knowest that well enough, dame,' replied the apprentice. 'I can touch the players themselves at the Bull and at the Fortune for presenting anything except a gentleman. Take but this d—d skin of frippery off me, which I think the devil stuck me into, and you shall put me into nothing else that I will not become as if I were born to it.'

'Well, we will talk of your transmutation by and by,' said the dame, 'and find you clothes withal, and money besides; for it will take a good deal to carry the thing handsomely through.'

'But where is that money to come from, dame?' said Jenkin; 'there is a question I would fain have answered before I touch it.'

'Why, what a fool art thou to ask such a question! Suppose I am content to advance it to please young madam, what is the harm then?'

'I will suppose no such thing,' said Jenkin, hastily; 'I know that you, dame, have no gold to spare, and maybe would not

spare it if you had ; so that cock will not crow. It must be from Margaret herself.'

'Well, thou suspicious animal, and what if it were?' said Ursula.

'Only this,' replied Jenkin, 'that I will presently to her, and learn if she has come fairly by so much ready money ; for sooner than connive at her getting it by any indirection, I would hang myself at once. It is enough what I have done myself, no need to engage poor Margaret in such villainy. I'll to her, and tell her of the danger — I will, by Heaven !'

'You are mad to think of it,' said Dame Suddlechop, considerably alarmed ; 'hear me but a moment. I know not precisely from whom she got the money ; but sure I am that she obtained it at her godfather's.'

'Why, Master George Heriot is not returned from France,' said Jenkin.

'No,' replied Ursula, 'but Dame Judith is at home ; and the strange lady, whom they call Master Heriot's ghost — she never goes abroad.'

'It is very true, Dame Suddlechop,' said Jenkin ; 'and I believe you have guessed right : they say that lady has coin at will ; and if Margaret can get a handful of fairy gold, why, she is free to throw it away at will.'

'Ah, Jin Vin,' said the dame, reducing her voice almost to a whisper, 'we should not want gold at will neither, could we but read the riddle of that lady !'

'They may read it that list,' said Jenkin ; 'I'll never pry into what concerns me not. Master George Heriot is a worthy and brave citizen, and an honour to London, and has a right to manage his own household as he likes best. There was once a talk of rabbling him the fifth of November before the last, because they said he kept a nunnery in his house, like old Lady Foljambe ; but Master George is well loved among the 'prentices, and we got so many brisk boys of us together as should have rabbled the rabble had they had but the heart to rise.'

'Well, let that pass,' said Ursula ; 'and now, tell me how you will manage to be absent from shop a day or two, for you must think that this matter will not be ended sooner.'

'Why, as to that, I can say nothing,' said Jenkin, 'I have always served duly and truly ; I have no heart to play truant, and cheat my master of his time as well as his money.'

'Nay, but the point is to get back his money for him,' said Ursula, 'which he is not likely to see on other conditions.'

Could you not ask leave to go down to your uncle in Essex for two or three days? He may be ill, you know.'

'Why, if I must, I must,' said Jenkin, with a heavy sigh; 'but I will not be lightly caught treading these dark and crooked paths again.'

'Hush thee, then,' said the dame, 'and get leave for this very evening; and come back hither, and I will introduce you to another implement who must be employed in the matter. Stay, stay! the lad is mazed; you would not go into your master's shop in that guise, surely? Your trunk is in the matted chamber with your 'prentice things; go and put them on as fast as you can.'

'I think I am bewitched,' said Jenkin, giving a glance towards his dress, 'or that these fool's trappings have made as great an ass of me as of many I have seen wear them; but let me once be rid of the harness, and if you catch me putting it on again, I will give you leave to sell me to a gipsy to carry pots, pans, and beggar's bantlings all the rest of my life.'

So saying, he retired to change his apparel.

CHAPTER XXII

Chance will not do the work. Chance sends the breeze ;
But if the pilot slumber at the helm,
The very wind that wafts us towards the port
May dash us on the shelves. The steersman's part is vigilance,
Blow it or rough or smooth.

Old Play.

WE left Nigel, whose fortunes we are bound to trace by the engagement contracted in our title-page, sad and solitary in the mansion of Trapbois, the usurer, having just received a letter instead of a visit from his friend the Templar, stating reasons why he could not at that time come to see him in Alsatia. So that it appeared his intercourse with the better and more respectable class of society was, for the present, entirely cut off. This was a melancholy, and, to a proud mind like that of Nigel, a degrading, reflection.

He went to the window of his apartment, and found the street enveloped in one of those thick, dingy, yellow-coloured fogs which often invest the lower part of London and Westminster. Amid the darkness, dense and palpable, were seen to wander like phantoms a reveller or two, whom the morning had surprised where the evening left them ; and who now, with tottering steps, and by an instinct which intoxication could not wholly overcome, were groping the way to their own homes, to convert day into night, for the purpose of sleeping off the debauch which had turned night into day. Although it was broad day in the other parts of the city, it was scarce dawn yet in Alsatia ; and none of the sounds of industry or occupation were there heard which had long before aroused the slumberers in every other quarter. The prospect was too tiresome and disagreeable to detain Lord Glenvarloch at his station, so, turning from the window, he examined with more interest the furniture and appearance of the apartment which he tenanted.

Much of it had been in its time rich and curious. There was

a huge four-post bed, with as much carved oak about it as would have made the head of a man-of-war, and tapestry hangings ample enough to have been her sails. There was a huge mirror with a massy frame of gilt brass-work, which was of Venetian manufacture, and must have been worth a considerable sum before it received the tremendous crack which, traversing it from one corner to the other, bore the same proportion to the surface that the Nile bears to the map of Egypt. The chairs were of different forms and shapes : some had been carved, some gilded, some covered with damasked leather, some with embroidered work, but all were damaged and worm-eaten. There was a picture of 'Susanna and the Elders,' over the chimney-piece, which might have been accounted a choice piece, had not the rats made free with the chaste fair one's nose, and with the beard of one of her reverend admirers.

In a word, all that Lord Glenvarloch saw seemed to have been articles carried off by appraisement or distress, or bought as pennyworths at some obscure broker's, and huddled together in the apartment, as in a sale-room, without regard to taste or congruity.

The place appeared to Nigel to resemble the houses near the sea-coast, which are too often furnished with the spoils of wrecked vessels, as this was probably fitted up with the relics of ruined profligates. 'My own skiff is among the breakers,' thought Lord Glenvarloch, 'though my wreck will add little to the profits of the spoiler.'

He was chiefly interested in the state of the grate—a huge assemblage of rusted iron bars which stood in the chimney; unequally supported by three brazen feet, moulded into the form of lion's claws, while the fourth, which had been bent by an accident, seemed proudly uplifted as if to paw the ground; or as if the whole article had nourished the ambitious purpose of pacing forth into the middle of the apartment, and had one foot ready raised for the journey. A smile passed over Nigel's face as this fantastic idea presented itself to his fancy. 'I must stop its march, however,' he thought; 'for this morning is chill and raw enough to demand some fire.'

He called accordingly from the top of a large staircase, with a heavy oaken balustrade, which gave access to his own and other apartments, for the house was old and of considerable size; but, receiving no answer to his repeated summons, he was compelled to go in search of some one who might accommodate him with what he wanted.

Nigel had, according to the fashion of the old world in Scotland, received an education which might, in most particulars, be termed simple, hardy, and unostentatious; but he had, nevertheless, been accustomed to much personal deference, and to the constant attendance and ministry of one or more domestics. This was the universal custom in Scotland, where wages were next to nothing, and where, indeed, a man of title or influence might have as many attendants as he pleased for the mere expense of food, clothes, and countenance. Nigel was therefore mortified and displeased when he found himself without notice or attendance; and the more dissatisfied, because he was at the same time angry with himself for suffering such a trifle to trouble him at all amongst matters of more deep concernment. 'There must surely be some servants in so large a house as this,' said he, as he wandered over the place, through which he was conducted by a passage which branched off from the gallery. As he went on, he tried the entrance to several apartments, some of which he found were locked and others unfurnished, all apparently unoccupied; so that at length he returned to the staircase, and resolved to make his way down to the lower part of the house, where he supposed he must at least find the old gentleman and his ill-favoured daughter. With this purpose, he first made his entrance into a little low, dark parlour, containing a well-worn leathern easy-chair, before which stood a pair of slippers, while on the left side rested a crutch-handled staff; an oaken table stood before it, and supported a huge desk clamped with iron, and a massive pewter inkstand. Around the apartment were shelves, cabinets, and other places convenient for depositing papers. A sword, musketoon, and a pair of pistols hung over the chimney, in ostentatious display, as if to intimate that the proprietor would be prompt in the defence of his premises.

'This must be the usurer's den,' thought Nigel; and he was about to call aloud, when the old man, awakened even by the slightest noise, for avarice seldom sleeps sound, soon was heard from the inner room, speaking in a voice of irritability, rendered more tremulous by his morning cough.

'Ugh, ugh, ugh — who is there? I say — ugh, ugh — who is there? Why, Martha! — ugh, ugh — Martha Trapbois — here be thieves in the house, and they will not speak to me — why, Martha! — thieves, thieves — ugh, ugh, ugh!'

Nigel endeavoured to explain, but the idea of thieves had taken possession of the old man's pineal gland, and he kept

coughing and screaming, and screaming and coughing, until the gracious Martha entered the apartment; and, having first outscramed her father, in order to convince him that there was no danger, and to assure him that the intruder was their new lodger, and having as often heard her sire ejaculate — 'Hold him fast — ugh, ugh — hold him fast till I come,' she at length succeeded in silencing his fears and his clamour, and then coldly and drily asked Lord Glenvarloch what he wanted in her father's apartment.

Her lodger had, in the meantime, leisure to contemplate her appearance, which did not by any means improve the idea he had formed of it by candlelight on the preceding evening. She was dressed in what was called a Queen Mary's ruff and farthingale; not the falling ruff with which the unfortunate Mary of Scotland is usually painted, but that which, with more than Spanish stiffness, surrounded the throat, and set off the morose head, of her fierce namesake of Smithfield memory. This antiquated dress assorted well with the faded complexion, grey eyes, thin lips, and austere visage of the antiquated maiden, which was, moreover, enhanced by a black hood, worn as her head-gear, carefully disposed so as to prevent any of her hair from escaping to view, probably because the simplicity of the period knew no art of disguising the colour with which time had begun to grizzle her tresses. Her figure was tall, thin, and flat, with skinny arms and hands, and feet of the larger size, cased in huge high-heeled shoes, which added height to a stature already ungainly. Apparently some art had been used by the tailor to conceal a slight defect of shape, occasioned by the accidental elevation of one shoulder above the other; but the praiseworthy efforts of the ingenious mechanic had only succeeded in calling the attention of the observer to his benevolent purpose without demonstrating that he had been able to achieve it.

Such was Mrs. Martha Trapbois, whose dry 'What were you seeking here, sir?' fell again, and with reiterated sharpness, on the ear of Nigel, as he gazed upon her presence, and compared it internally to one of the faded and grim figures in the old tapestry which adorned his bedstead. It was, however, necessary to reply, and he answered, that 'He came in search of the servants, as he desired to have a fire kindled in his apartment on account of the rawness of the morning.'

'The woman who does our char-work,' answered Mistress Martha, 'comes at eight o'clock; if you want fire sooner, there

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is an old, a very old man, and his wits, as you may see, are somewhat weakened — though I would not advise you to make a bargain with him, else you may find them too sharp for your own. For myself, I am a lone woman, and, to say truth, care little to see or converse with any one. If you can be satisfied with house-room, shelter, and safety, it will be your own fault if you have them not, and they are not always to be found in this unhappy quarter. But, if you seek deferential observance and attendance, I tell you at once you will not find them here.'

'I am not wont either to thrust myself upon acquaintance, madam, or to give trouble,' said the guest; 'nevertheless, I shall need the assistance of a domestic to assist me to dress. Perhaps you can recommend me to such?'

'Yes, to twenty,' answered Mistress Martha, 'who will pick your purse while they tie your points, and cut your throat while they smooth your pillow.'

'I will be his servant myself,' said the old man, whose intellect, for a moment distanced, had again, in some measure, got up with the conversation. 'I will brush his cloak — ugh, ugh — and tie his points — ugh, ugh — and clean his shoes — ugh — and run on his errands with speed and safety — ugh, ugh, ugh, ugh — for a consideration.'

'Good-morrow to you, sir,' said Martha to Nigel, in a tone of direct and positive dismissal. 'It cannot be agreeable to a daughter that a stranger should hear her father speak thus. If you be really a gentleman, you will retire to your own apartment.'

'I will not delay a moment,' said Nigel, respectfully, for he was sensible that circumstances palliated the woman's rudeness. 'I would but ask you, if seriously there can be danger in procuring the assistance of a serving-man in this place?'

'Young gentleman,' said Martha, 'you must know little of Whitefriars to ask the question. We live alone in this house, and seldom has a stranger entered it; nor should you, to be plain, had my will been consulted. Look at the door: see if that of a castle can be better secured; the windows of the first floor are grated on the outside, and within, look to these shutters.'

She pulled one of them aside, and showed a ponderous apparatus of bolts and chains for securing the window-shutters, while her father, pressing to her side, seized her gown with a trembling hand, and said in a low whisper, 'Show not the trick of locking and undoing them. Show him not the trick on't, Martha — ugh, ugh — on *no* consideration.'

are fagots and a bucket of sea-coal in the stone-closet at the head of the stair, and there is a flint and steel on the upper shelf; you can light fire for yourself if you will.'

'No — no — no, Martha,' ejaculated her father, who, having donned his rusty tunic, with his hose all ungirt, and his feet slip-shod, hastily came out of the inner apartment, with his mind probably full of robbers, for he had a naked rapier in his hand, which still looked formidable, though rust had somewhat marred its shine. What he had heard at entrance about lighting a fire had changed, however, the current of his ideas. 'No — no — no,' he cried, and each negative was more emphatic than its predecessor. 'The gentleman shall not have the trouble to put on a fire — ugh — ugh. I'll put it on myself for a *con-si-de-ra-ti-on*.'

This last word was a favourite expression with the old gentleman, which he pronounced in a peculiar manner, gasping it out syllable by syllable, and laying a strong emphasis upon the last. It was, indeed, a sort of protecting clause, by which he guarded himself against all inconveniences attendant on the rash habit of offering service or civility of any kind, the which, when hastily snapped at by those to whom they are uttered, give the profferer sometimes room to repent his promptitude.

'For shame, father,' said Martha, 'that must not be. Master Grahame will kindle his own fire, or wait till the charwoman comes to do it for him, just as likes him best.'

'No, child — no, child. Child Martha, no,' reiterated the old miser; 'no charwoman shall ever touch a grate in my house; they put — ugh, ugh — the fagot uppermost, and so the coal kindles not, and the flame goes up the chimney, and wood and heat are both thrown away. Now, I will lay it properly for the gentleman, for a consideration, so that it shall last — ugh, ugh — last the whole day.' Here his vehemence increased his cough so violently, that Nigel could only, from a scattered word here and there, comprehend that it was a recommendation to his daughter to remove the poker and tongs from the stranger's fireside, with an assurance that, when necessary, his landlord would be in attendance to adjust it himself, 'for a consideration.'

Martha paid as little attention to the old man's injunctions as a predominant dame gives to those of a henpecked husband. She only repeated, in a deeper and more emphatic tone of censure — 'For shame, father — for shame!' then, turning to her guest, said, with her usual ungraciousness of manner — 'Master Grahame, it is best to be plain with you at first. My father

in the bosom of the scenic personage. There are no such soliloquies in nature, it is true, but unless they were received as a conventional medium of communication betwixt the poet and the audience, we should reduce dramatic authors to the recipe of Master Puffi, who makes Lord Burleigh intimate a long train of political reasoning to the audience by one comprehensive shake of his noddle. In narrative, no doubt, the writer has the alternative of telling that his personages thought so and so, inferred thus and thus, and arrived at such and such a conclusion; but the soliloquy is a more concise and spirited mode of communicating the same information; and therefore thus communed, or thus might have communed, the Lord of Glenvarloch with his own mind:

‘She is right, and has taught me a lesson I will profit by. I have been, through my whole life, one who leant upon others for that assistance which it is more truly noble to derive from my own exertions. I am ashamed of feeling the paltry inconvenience which long habit has led me to annex to the want of a servant’s assistance—I am ashamed of that; but far, far more am I ashamed to have suffered the same habit of throwing my own burden on others to render me, since I came to this city, a mere victim of those events which I have never even attempted to influence—a thing never acting, but perpetually acted upon—protected by one friend, deceived by another; but in the advantage which I received from the one, and the evil I have sustained from the other, as passive and helpless as a boat that drifts without oar or rudder at the mercy of the winds and waves. I became a courtier, because Heriot so advised it; a gamester, because Dalgarno so contrived it; an Alsatian, because Lowestoffe so willed it. Whatever of good or bad has befallen me hath arisen out of the agency of others, not from my own. My father’s son must no longer hold this facile and puerile course. Live or die, sink or swim, Nigel Olifaunt, from this moment, shall owe his safety, success, and honour to his own exertions, or shall fall with the credit of having at least exerted his own free agency. I will write it down in my tablets, in her very words—“The wise man is his own best assistant.”’

He had just put his tablets in his pocket, when the old charwoman, who, to add to her efficiency, was sadly crippled by rheumatism, hobbled into the room, to try if she could gain a small gratification by waiting on the stranger. She readily undertook to get Lord Glenvarloch’s breakfast, and, as there

Martha went on, without paying him any attention — ‘And yet, young gentleman, we have been more than once like to find all these defences too weak to protect our lives; such an evil effect on the wicked generation around us hath been made by the unhappy report of my poor father’s wealth.’

‘Say nothing of that, housewife,’ said the miser, his irritability increased by the very supposition of his being wealthy — ‘say nothing of that, or I will beat thee, housewife — beat thee with my staff, for fetching and carrying lies that will procure our throats to be cut at last — ugh, ugh. I am but a poor man,’ he continued, turning to Nigel — ‘a very poor man, that am willing to do any honest turn upon earth for a modest consideration.’

‘I therefore warn you of the life you must lead, young gentleman,’ said Martha; ‘the poor woman who does the char-work will assist you so far as is in her power, but the wise man is his own best servant and assistant.’

‘It is a lesson you have taught me, madam, and I thank you for it; I will assuredly study it at leisure.’

‘You will do well,’ said Martha; ‘and as you seem thankful for advice, I, though I am no professed counsellor of others, will give you more. Make no intimacy with any one in Whitefriars; borrow no money, on any score, especially from my father, for, dotard as he seems, he will make an ass of you. Last, and best of all, stay here not an instant longer than you can help it. Farewell, sir.’

‘A gnarled tree may bear good fruit, and a harsh nature may give good counsel,’ thought the Lord of Glenvarloch, as he retreated to his own apartment, where the same reflection occurred to him again and again, while, unable as yet to reconcile himself to the thoughts of becoming his own fire-maker, he walked up and down his bedroom, to warm himself by exercise.

At length his meditations arranged themselves in the following soliloquy — by which expression I beg leave to observe once for all, that I do not mean that Nigel literally said aloud with his bodily organs the words which follow in inverted commas, while pacing the room by himself, but that I myself choose to present to my dearest reader the picture of my hero’s mind, his reflections and resolutions, in the form of a speech rather than in that of a narrative. In other words, I have put his thoughts into language; and this I conceive to be the purpose of the soliloquy upon the stage as well as in the closet, being at once the most natural, and perhaps the only, way of communicating to the spectator what is supposed to be passing

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was an eating-house at the next door, she succeeded in a shorter time than Nigel had augured.

As his solitary meal was finished, one of the Temple porters, or inferior officers, was announced, as seeking Master Grahame, on the part of his friend, Master Lowestoffe; and, being admitted by the old woman to his apartment, he delivered to Nigel a small mail-trunk, with the clothes he had desired should be sent to him, and then, with more mystery, put into his hand a casket, or strong-box, which he carefully concealed beneath his cloak. 'I am glad to be rid on't,' said the fellow, as he placed it on the table.

'Why, it is surely not so very heavy,' answered Nigel, 'and you are a stout young man.'

'Ay, sir,' replied the fellow; 'but Samson himself would not have carried such a matter safely through Alsatia, had the lads of the huff known what it was. Please to look into it, sir, and see all is right. I am an honest fellow, and it comes safe out of my hands. How long it may remain so afterwards, will depend on your own care. I would not my good name were to suffer by any after-clap.'

To satisfy the scruples of the messenger, Lord Glenvarloch opened the casket in his presence, and saw that his small stock of money, with two or three valuable papers which it contained, and particularly the original sign-manual which the King had granted in his favour, were in the same order in which he had left them. At the man's further instance, he availed himself of the writing-materials which were in the casket, in order to send a line to Master Lowestoffe, declaring that his property had reached him in safety. He added some grateful acknowledgments for Lowestoffe's services, and, just as he was sealing and delivering his billet to the messenger, his aged landlord entered the apartment. His threadbare suit of black clothes was now somewhat better arranged than they had been in the dishabille of his first appearance, and his nerves and intellects seemed to be less fluttered; for, without much coughing or hesitation, he invited Nigel to partake of a morning-draught of wholesome single ale, which he brought in a large leathern tankard, or black-jack, carried in the one hand, while the other stirred it round with a sprig of rosemary, to give it, as the old man said, a flavour.

Nigel declined the courteous proffer, and intimated by his manner, while he did so, that he desired no intrusion on the privacy of his own apartment; which, indeed, he was the more entitled to maintain, considering the cold reception he had

that morning met with when straying from its precincts into those of his landlord. But the open casket contained matter, or rather metal, so attractive to old Trapbois, that he remained fixed, like a setting-dog at a dead point, his nose advanced, and one hand expanded like the lifted forepaw, by which that sagacious quadruped sometimes indicates that it is a hare which he has in the wind. Nigel was about to break the charm which had thus arrested old Trapbois by shutting the lid of the casket, when his attention was withdrawn from him by the question of the messenger, who, holding out the letter, asked whether he was to leave it at Mr. Lowestoffe's chambers in the Temple or carry it to the Marshalsea.

'The Marshalsea!'¹ repeated Lord Glenvarloch; 'what of the Marshalsea?'

'Why, sir,' said the man, 'the poor gentleman is laid up there in lavender, because, they say, his own kind heart led him to scald his fingers with another man's broth.'

Nigel hastily snatched back the letter, broke the seal, joined to the contents his earnest entreaty that he might be instantly acquainted with the cause of his confinement, and added that, if it arose out of his own unhappy affair, it would be of brief duration, since he had, even before hearing of a reason which so peremptorily demanded that he should surrender himself, adopted the resolution to do so, as the manliest and most proper course which his ill-fortune and imprudence had left in his own power. He therefore conjured Mr. Lowestoffe to have no delicacy upon this score, but, since his surrender was what he had determined upon as a sacrifice due to his own character, that he would have the frankness to mention in what manner it could be best arranged, so as to extricate him, Lowestoffe, from the restraint to which the writer could not but fear his friend had been subjected, on account of the generous interest which he had taken in his concerns. The letter concluded, that the writer would suffer twenty-four hours to elapse in expectation of hearing from him, and, at the end of that period, was determined to put his purpose in execution. He delivered the billet to the messenger, and, enforcing his request with a piece of money, urged him, without a moment's delay, to convey it to the hands of Master Lowestoffe.

'I—I—I—will carry it to him myself,' said the old usurer, 'for half the consideration.'

The man, who heard this attempt to take his duty and per-

¹ See Note 28.

quisites over his head, lost no time in pocketing the money, and departed on his errand as fast as he could.

'Master Trapbois,' said Nigel, addressing the old man somewhat impatiently, 'had you any particular commands for me?'

'I — I — came to see if you rested well,' answered the old man; 'and — if I could do anything to serve you, on any consideration.'

'Sir, I thank you,' said Lord Glenvarloch — 'I thank you'; and, ere he could say more, a heavy footstep was heard on the stair.

'My God!' exclaimed the old man, starting up. 'Why, Dorothy — charwoman — why, daughter — draw bolt, I say, housewives — the door hath been left a-latch!'

The door of the chamber opened wide, and in strutted the portly bulk of the military hero whom Nigel had on the preceding evening in vain endeavoured to recognise.

CHAPTER XXIII

Swashbuckler. Bilboe's the word.

Pierrot. It hath been spoke too often,
The spell hath lost its charm. I tell thee, friend,
The meanest cur that trots the street will turn,
And snarl against your proffer'd bastinado.

Swashbuckler. 'Tis art shall do it, then ; I will dose
the mongrels,
Or, in plain terms, I'll use the private knife
'Stead of the brandish'd falchion.

Old Play.

THE noble Captain Colepepper, or Peppercull, for he was known by both these names, and some others besides, had a martial and a swashing exterior, which, on the present occasion, was rendered yet more peculiar by a patch covering his left eye and a part of the cheek. The sleeves of his thickset velvet jerkin were polished and shone with grease ; his buff gloves had huge tops, which reached almost to the elbow ; his swordbelt of the same materials extended its breadth from his haunchbone to his small ribs, and supported on the one side his large black-hilted back-sword, on the other a dagger of like proportions. He paid his compliments to Nigel with that air of predetermined effrontery which announces that it will not be repelled by any coldness of reception, asked Trapbois how he did by the familiar title of old Peter Pillory, and then seizing upon the black-jack, emptied it off at a draught to the health of the last and youngest freeman of Alsatia, the noble and loving Master Nigel Grahame.

When he had set down the empty pitcher and drawn his breath, he began to criticise the liquor which it had lately contained. 'Sufficient single beer, old Pillory, and, as I take it, brewed at the rate of a nutshell of malt to a butt of Thames—as dead as a corpse, too, and yet it went hissing down my throat—bubbling, by Jove, like water upon hot iron. You left us early, noble Master Grahame, but, good faith, we had a carouse to your honour : we heard *butt* ring hollow ere we

parted ; we were as loving as inkle-weavers ; we fought, too, to finish off the gawdy. I bear some marks of the parson about me, you see — a note of the sermon or so, which should have been addressed to my ear, but missed its mark and reached my left eye. The man of God bears my sign-manual too ; but the duke made us friends again, and it cost me more sack than I could carry, and all the Rhenish to boot, to pledge the seer in the way of love and reconciliation. But, caracco ! 't is a vile old canting slave for all that, whom I will one day beat out of his devil's livery into all the colours of the rainbow. Basta ! Said I well, old Trapbois ? Where is thy daughter, man ? What says she to my suit ? 'T is an honest one. Wilt have a soldier for thy son-in-law, old Pillory, to mingle the soul of martial honour with thy thieving, miching, petty-larceny blood, as men put bold brandy into muddy ale ?

'My daughter receives not company so early, noble captain,' said the usurer, and concluded his speech with a dry, emphatical 'ugh — ugh.'

'What, upon no con-si-de-ra-ti-on ?' said the captain ; 'and wherefore not, old Truepenny ? she has not much time to lose in driving her bargain, methinks.'

'Captain,' said Trapbois, 'I was upon some little business with our noble friend here, Master Nigel Green — ugh, ugh, ugh —'

'And you would have me gone, I warrant you ?' answered the bully ; 'but patience, old Pillory, thine hour is not yet come, man. You see,' he said, pointing to the casket, 'that noble Master Grahame, whom you call Green, has got the "decuses" and the "smelts."'

'Which you would willingly rid him of — ha ! ha ! — ugh, ugh,' answered the usurer, 'if you knew how ; but, lack-a-day ! thou art one of those that come out for wool and art sure to go home shorn. Why now, but that I am sworn against laying of wagers, I would risk some consideration that this honest guest of mine sends thee home penniless, if thou darest venture with him — ugh, ugh — at any game which gentlemen play at.'

'Merry, thou hast me on the hip there, thou old miserly cony-catcher !' answered the captain, taking a bale of dice from the sleeve of his coat. 'I must always keep company with these damnable doctors, and they have made me every baby's cully, and purged my purse into an atrophy ; but never mind, it passes the time as well as aught else. How say you, Master Grahame ?'

The fellow paused ; but even the extremity of his impudence could hardly withstand the cold look of utter contempt with which Nigel received his proposal, returning it with a simple, 'I only play where I know my company, and never in the morning.'

'Cards may be more agreeable,' said Captain Colepepper ; 'and for knowing your company, here is honest old Pillory will tell you Jack Colepepper plays as truly on the square as e'er a man that trowled a die. Men talk of high and low dice, fulhams and bristles, topping, knapping, slurring, stabbing, and a hundred ways of rooking besides ; but broil me like a rasher of bacon, if I could ever learn the trick on 'em !'

'You have got the vocabulary perfect, sir, at the least,' said Nigel, in the same cold tone.

'Yes, by mine honour have I,' returned the Hector ; 'they are phrases that a gentleman learns about town. But perhaps you would like a set at tennis, or a game at balloon ; we have an indifferent good court hard by here, and a set of as gentleman-like blades as ever banged leather against brick and mortar.'

'I beg to be excused at present,' said Lord Glenvarloch ; 'and to be plain, among the valuable privileges your society has conferred on me, I hope I may reckon that of being private in my own apartment when I have a mind.'

'Your humble servant, sir,' said the captain ; 'and I thank you for your civility. Jack Colepepper can have enough of company, and thrusts himself on no one. But perhaps you will like to make a match at skittles ?'

'I am by no means that way disposed,' replied the young nobleman.

'Or to leap a flea — run a snail — match a wherry, eh ?'

'No — I will do none of these,' answered Nigel.

Here the old man, who had been watching with his little peery eyes, pulled the bulky Hector by the skirt, and whispered, 'Do not vapour him the huff, it will not pass ; let the trout play, he will rise to the hook presently.'

But the bully, confiding in his own strength, and probably mistaking for timidity the patient scorn with which Nigel received his proposals, incited also by the open casket, began to assume a louder and more threatening tone. He drew himself up, bent his brows, assumed a look of professional ferocity, and continued, 'In Alsatia, look ye, a man must be neighbourly and companionable. Zouns ! sir, we would slit any nose that was turned up at us honest fellows. Ay, sir, we would slit it

up to the gristle, though it had smelt nothing all its life but musk, ambergris, and court-scented water. Rabbit me, I am a soldier, and care no more for a lord than a lamplighter !'

'Are you seeking a quarrel, sir ?' said Nigel, calmly, having in truth no desire to engage himself in a discreditable broil in such a place, and with such a character.

'Quarrel, sir !' said the captain ; 'I am not seeking a quarrel, though I care not how soon I find one. Only I wish you to understand you must be neighbourly, that's all. What if we should go over the water to the garden, and see a bull hanked this fine morning — 'sdeath, will you do nothing ?'

'Something I am strangely tempted to do at this moment,' said Nigel.

'Videlicet,' said Colepepper, with a swaggering air, 'let us hear the temptation.'

'I am tempted to throw you headlong from the window, unless you presently make the best of your way downstairs.'

'Throw me from the window ! — hell and furies !' exclaimed the captain. 'I have confronted twenty crooked sabres at Buda with my single rapier, and shall a chitty-faced, beggarly Scots lordling speak of me and a window in the same breath ? Stand off, old Pillory, let me make Scots collops of him : he dies the death !'

'For the love of Heaven, gentlemen,' exclaimed the old miser, throwing himself between them, 'do not break the peace on any consideration ! Noble guest, forbear the captain ; he is a very Hector of Troy. Trusty Hector, forbear my guest ; he is like to prove a very Achilles — ugh — ugh —'

Here he was interrupted by his asthma, but, nevertheless, continued to interpose his person between Colepepper, who had unsheathed his whinyard, and was making vain passes at his antagonist, and Nigel, who had stepped back to take his sword, and now held it undrawn in his left hand.

'Make an end of this foolery, you scoundrel !' said Nigel. 'Do you come hither to vent your noisy oaths and your bottled-up valour on me. You seem to know me, and I am half ashamed to say I have at length been able to recollect you ; remember the garden behind the ordinary, you dastardly ruffian, and the speed with which fifty men saw you run from a drawn sword. Get you gone, sir, and do not put me to the vile labour of cudgelling such a cowardly rascal downstairs.'

The bully's countenance grew dark as night at this unexpected recognition ; for he had undoubtedly thought himself

secure in his change of dress and his black patch from being discovered by a person who had seen him but once. He set his teeth, clenched his hands, and it seemed as if he was seeking for a moment's courage to fly upon his antagonist. But his heart failed, he sheathed his sword, turned his back in gloomy silence, and spoke not until he reached the door, when, turning round, he said, with a deep oath, 'If I be not avenged of you for this insolence ere many days go by, I would the gallows had my body and the devil my spirit!'

So saying, and with a look where determined spite and malice made his features savagely fierce, though they could not overcome his fear, he turned and left the house. Nigel followed him as far as the gallery at the head of the staircase, with the purpose of seeing him depart, and ere he returned was met by Mistress Martha Trapbois, whom the noise of the quarrel had summoned from her own apartment. He could not resist saying to her in his natural displeasure — 'I would, madam, you could teach your father and his friends the lesson which you had the goodness to bestow on me this morning, and prevail on them to leave me the unmolested privacy of my own apartment.'

'If you come hither for quiet or retirement, young man,' answered she, 'you have been advised to an evil retreat. You might seek mercy in the Star Chamber, or holiness in hell, with better success than quiet in Alsatia. But my father shall trouble you no longer.'

So saying, she entered the apartment, and, fixing her eyes on the casket, she said with emphasis — 'If you display such a loadstone, it will draw many a steel knife to your throat.'

While Nigel hastily shut the casket, she addressed her father, upbraiding him, with small reverence, for keeping company with the cowardly, hectoring, murdering villain, John Colepepper.

'Ay — ay, child,' said the old man, with the cunning leer which intimated perfect satisfaction with his own superior address, 'I know — I know — ugh — but I'll cross-bite him. I know them all, and I can manage them; ay, ay — I have the trick on 't — ugh — ugh.'

'You manage, father!' said the austere damsel; 'you will manage to have your throat cut, and that ere long. You cannot hide from them your gains and your gold as formerly.'

'My gains, wench! my gold!' said the usurer; 'alack-a-day, few of these and hard got — few and hard got.'

'This will not serve you, father, any longer,' said she, 'and had not served you thus long, but that Bully Colepepper had contrived a cheaper way of plundering your house, even by means of my miserable self. But why do I speak to him of all this?' she said, checking herself, and shrugging her shoulders with an expression of pity which did not fall much short of scorn. 'He hears me not—he thinks not of me. Is it not strange that the love of gathering gold should survive the care to preserve both property and life?'

'Your father,' said Lord Glenvarloch, who could not help respecting the strong sense and feeling shown by this poor woman, even amidst all her rudeness and severity—'your father seems to have his faculties sufficiently alert when he is in the exercise of his ordinary pursuits and functions. I wonder he is not sensible of the weight of your arguments.'

'Nature made him a man senseless of danger, and that insensibility is the best thing I have derived from him,' said she. 'Age has left him shrewdness enough to tread his old beaten paths, but not to seek new courses. The old blind horse will long continue to go its rounds in the mill, when it would stumble in the open meadow.'

'Daughter!—why, wench—why, housewife!' said the old man, awakening out of some dream, in which he had been sneering and chuckling in imagination, probably over a successful piece of roguery—'go to chamber, wench—go to chamber—draw bolts and chain—look sharp to door—let none in or out but worshipful Master Grahame. I must take my cloak, and go to Duke Hildebrod—ay, ay, time has been, my own warrant was enough; but the lower we lie, the more are we under the wind.'

And, with his wonted chorus of muttering and coughing, the old man left the apartment. His daughter stood for a moment looking after him, with her usual expression of discontent and sorrow.

'You ought to persuade your father,' said Nigel, 'to leave this evil neighbourhood, if you are in reality apprehensive for his safety.'

'He would be safe in no other quarter,' said the daughter; 'I would rather the old man were dead than publicly dishonoured. In other quarters he would be pelted and pursued, like an owl which ventures into sunshine. Here he was safe, while his comrades could avail themselves of his talents; he is now squeezed and fleeced by them on every pretence. They

consider him as a vessel on the strand, from which each may snatch a prey; and the very jealousy which they entertain respecting him as a common property may perhaps induce them to guard him from more private and daring assaults.'

'Still, methinks, you ought to leave this place,' answered Nigel, 'since you might find a safe retreat in some distant country.'

'In Scotland, doubtless,' said she, looking at him with a sharp and suspicious eye, 'and enrich strangers with our rescued wealth. Ha! young man?'

'Madam, if you knew me,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'you would spare the suspicion implied in your words.'

'Who shall assure me of that?' said Martha, sharply. 'They say you are a brawler and a gamester, and I know how far these are to be trusted by the unhappy.'

'They do me wrong, by Heaven!' said Lord Glenvarloch.

'It may be so,' said Martha; 'I am little interested in the degree of your vice or your folly; but it is plain that the one or the other has conducted you hither, and that your best hope of peace, safety, and happiness is to be gone, with the least possible delay, from a place which is always a sty for swine, and often a shambles.' So saying, she left the apartment.

There was something in the ungracious manner of this female amounting almost to contempt of him she spoke to—an indignity to which Glenvarloch, notwithstanding his poverty, had not as yet been personally exposed, and which, therefore, gave him a transitory feeling of painful surprise. Neither did the dark hints which Martha threw out concerning the danger of his place of refuge sound by any means agreeably to his ears. The bravest man, placed in a situation in which he is surrounded by suspicious persons, and removed from all counsel and assistance except those afforded by a valiant heart and a strong arm, experiences a sinking of the spirit, a consciousness of abandonment, which for a moment chills his blood and depresses his natural gallantry of disposition.

But, if sad reflections arose in Nigel's mind, he had not time to indulge them; and, if he saw little prospect of finding friends in Alsatia, he found that he was not likely to be solitary for lack of visitors.

He had scarcely paced his apartment for ten minutes, endeavouring to arrange his ideas on the course which he was to pursue on quitting Alsatia, when he was interrupted by the sovereign of that quarter, the great Duke Hildebrod himself,

before whose approach the bolts and chains of the miser's dwelling fell, or withdrew, as of their own accord; and both the folding leaves of the door were opened, that he might roll himself into the house like a huge butt of liquor, a vessel to which he bore a considerable outward resemblance, both in size, shape, complexion, and contents.

'Good-morrow to your lordship,' said the greasy puncheon, cocking his single eye, and rolling it upon Nigel with a singular expression of familiar impudence; whilst his grim bull-dog, which was close at his heels, made a kind of gurgling in his throat, as if saluting, in similar fashion, a starved cat, the only living thing in Trapbois's house which we have not yet enumerated, and which had flown up to the top of the tester, where she stood clutching and grinning at the mastiff, whose greeting she accepted with as much good-will as Nigel bestowed on that of the dog's master.

'Peace, Belzie! — d—n thee, peace!' said Duke Hildebrod. 'Beasts and fools will be meddling, my lord.'

'I thought, sir,' answered Nigel, with as much haughtiness as was consistent with the cool distance which he desired to preserve — 'I had told you my name at present was Nigel Grahame.'

His eminence of Whitefriars on this burst out into a loud, chuckling, impudent laugh, repeating the word till his voice was almost inarticulate, 'Niggle Green — Niggle Green — Niggle Green! Why, my lord, you would be queered in the drinking of a penny pot of Malmsey, if you cry before you are touched. Why, you have told me the secret even now, had I not had a shrewd guess of it before. Why, Master Nigel, since that is the word, I only called you "my lord" because we made you a peer of Alsatia last night, when the sack was predominant. How you look now! Ha! ha! ha!'

Nigel, indeed, conscious that he had unnecessarily betrayed himself, replied hastily, 'He was much obliged to him for the honours conferred, but did not propose to remain in the sanctuary long enough to enjoy them.'

'Why, that may be as you will, an you will walk by wise counsel,' answered the ducal porpoise; and, although Nigel remained standing, in hopes to accelerate his guest's departure, he threw himself into one of the old tapestry-backed easy-chairs, which cracked under his weight, and began to call for old Trapbois.

The crone of all work appearing instead of her master, the

duke cursed her for a careless jade, to let a strange gentleman, and a brave guest, go without his morning's draught.

'I never take one, sir,' said Glenvarloch.

'Time to begin — time to begin,' answered the duke. 'Here, you old refuse of Sathan, go to our palace and fetch Lord Green's morning-draught. Let us see — what shall it be, my lord? — a humming double pot of ale, with a roasted crab dancing in it like a wherry above bridge? or, hum — ay, young men are sweet-toothed — a quart of burnt sack, with sugar and spice? — good against the fogs. Or, what say you to sipping a gill of right distilled waters? Come, we will have them all, and you shall take your choice. Here, you Jezebel, let Tim send the ale, and the sack, and the nipperkin of double-distilled, with a bit of diet-loaf, or some such trinket, and score it to the new-comer.'

Glenvarloch, bethinking himself that it might be as well to endure this fellow's insolence for a brief season as to get into farther discreditable quarrels, suffered him to take his own way, without interruption, only observing, 'You make yourself at home, sir, in my apartment; but, for the time, you may use your pleasure. Meantime, I would fain know what has procured me the honour of this unexpected visit?'

'You shall know that when old Deb has brought the liquor; I never speak of business dry-lipped. Why, how she drumbles; I warrant she stops to take a sip on the road, and then you will think you have had unchristian measure. In the meanwhile, look at that dog there — look Belzebub in the face, and tell me if you ever saw a sweeter beast — never flew but at head in his life.'

And, after this congenial panegyric, he was proceeding with a tale of a dog and a bull, which threatened to be somewhat of the longest, when he was interrupted by the return of the old crone, and two of his own tapsters, bearing the various kinds of drinkables which he had demanded, and which probably was the only species of interruption he would have endured with equanimity.

When the cups and cans were duly arranged upon the table, and when Deborah, whom the ducal generosity honoured with a penny farthing in the way of gratuity, had withdrawn with her satellites, the worthy potentate, having first slightly invited Lord Glenvarloch to partake of the liquor which he was to pay for, and after having observed that, excepting three poached eggs, a pint of bastard, and a cup of clary, he was fasting from everything but sin, set himself seriously to reinforce the radical

moisture. Glenvarloch had seen Scottish lairds and Dutch burgomasters at their potations ; but their exploits, though each might be termed a thirsty generation, were nothing to those of Duke Hildebrod, who seemed an absolute sandbed, capable of absorbing any given quantity of liquid, without being either vivified or overflowed. He drank off the ale to quench a thirst which, as he said, kept him in a fever from morning to night, and night to morning ; tiptoed off the sack to correct the crudity of the ale ; sent the spirits after the sack to keep all quiet, and then declared that, probably, he should not taste liquor till *post meridiem*, unless it was in compliment to some especial friend. Finally, he intimated that he was ready to proceed on the business which brought him from home so early, a proposition which Nigel readily received, though he could not help suspecting that the most important purpose of Duke Hildebrod's visit was already transacted.

In this, however, Lord Glenvarloch proved to be mistaken. Hildebrod, before opening what he had to say, made an accurate survey of the apartment, laying, from time to time, his finger on his nose, and winking on Nigel with his single eye, while he opened and shut the doors, lifted the tapestry, which concealed, in one or two places, the dilapidation of time upon the wainscoted walls, peeped into closets, and, finally, looked under the bed, to assure himself that the coast was clear of listeners and interlopers. He then resumed his seat, and beckoned confidentially to Nigel to draw his chair close to him.

'I am well as I am, Master Hildebrod,' replied the young lord, little disposed to encourage the familiarity which the man endeavoured to fix on him ; but the undismayed duke proceeded as follows : —

'You shall pardon me, my lord — and I now give you the title right seriously — if I remind you that our waters may be watched ; for though old Trapbois be as deaf as St. Paul's, yet his daughter has sharp ears, and sharp eyes enough, and it is of them that it is my business to speak.'

'Say away, then, sir,' said Nigel, edging his chair somewhat closer to the quicksand, 'although I cannot conceive what business I have either with mine host or his daughter.'

'We will see that in the twinkling of a quart-pot,' answered the gracious duke ; 'and first, my lord, you must not think to dance in a net before old Jack Hildebrod, that has thrice your years o'er his head, and was born, like King Richard, with all his eye-teeth ready cut.'

‘Well, sir, go on,’ said Nigel.

‘Why, then, my lord, I presume to say that, if you are, as I believe you are, that Lord Glenvarloch whom all the world talk of — the Scotch gallant that has spent all, to a thin cloak and a light purse — be not moved, my lord, it is so noised of you — men call you the sparrow-hawk, who will fly at all — ay, were it in the very Park. Be not moved, my lord.’

‘I am ashamed, sirrah,’ replied Glenvarloch, ‘that you should have power to move me by your insolence ; but beware — and, if you indeed guess who I am, consider how long I may be able to endure your tone of insolent familiarity.’

‘I crave pardon, my lord,’ said Hildebrod, with a sullen yet apologetic look ; ‘I meant no harm in speaking my poor mind. I know not what honour there may be in being familiar with your lordship, but I judge there is little safety, for Lowestoffe is laid up in lavender only for having shown you the way into Alsatia ; and so, what is to come of those who maintain you when you are here, or whether they will get most honour or most trouble by doing so, I leave with your lordship’s better judgment.’

‘I will bring no one into trouble on my account,’ said Lord Glenvarloch. ‘I will leave Whitefriars to-morrow. Nay, by Heaven, I will leave it this day.’

‘You will have more wit in your anger, I trust,’ said Duke Hildebrod ; ‘listen first to what I have to say to you, and, if honest Jack Hildebrod puts you not in the way of nicking them all, may he never cast doublets or gull a greenhorn again ! And so, my lord, in plain words, you must wap and win.’

‘Your words must be still plainer before I can understand them,’ said Nigel.

‘What the devil — a gamester, one who deals with the devil’s bones and the doctors, and not understand pedlar’s French ! Nay, then, I must speak plain English, and that’s the simpleton’s tongue.’

‘Speak, then, sir,’ said Nigel ; ‘and I pray you be brief, for I have little more time to bestow on you.’

‘Well, then, my lord, to be brief, as you and the lawyers call it — I understand you have an estate in the North, which changes masters for want of the redeeming ready. Ay, you start, but you cannot dance in a net before me, as I said before ; and so the King runs the frowning humour on you, and the court vapours you the go-by, and the Prince scowls at you from under his cap, and the favourite serves you out the

puckered brow and the cold shoulder, and the favourite's favourite——'

'To go no further, sir,' interrupted Nigel, 'suppose all this true, and what follows?'

'What follows?' returned Duke Hildebrod. 'Marry, this follows, that you will owe good deed, as well as good will, to him who shall put you in the way to walk with your beaver cocked in the presence, as an ye were Earl of Kildare, bully the courtiers, meet the Prince's blighting look with a bold brow, confront the favourite, baffle his deputy, and——'

'This is all well,' said Nigel; 'but how is it to be accomplished!'

'By making thee a prince of Peru, my lord of the northern latitudes——propping thine old castle with ingots——fertilising thy failing fortunes with gold dust; it shall but cost thee to put thy baron's coronet for a day or so on the brows of an old Caduca here, the man's daughter of the house, and thou art master of a mass of treasure that shall do all I have said for thee, and——'

'What, you would have me marry this old gentlewoman here, the daughter of mine host?' said Nigel, surprised and angry, yet unable to suppress some desire to laugh.

'Nay, my lord, I would have you marry fifty thousand good sterling pounds, for that, and better, hath old Trapbois hoarded; and thou shalt do a deed of mercy in it to the old man, who will lose his golden smelts in some worse way, for now that he is well-nigh past his day of work, his day of payment is like to follow.'

'Truly, this is a most courteous offer,' said Lord Glenvarloch; 'but may I pray of your candour, most noble duke, to tell me why you dispose of a ward of so much wealth on a stranger like me, who may leave you to-morrow?'

'In sooth, my lord,' said the duke, 'that question smacks more of the wit of Beaujeu's ordinary than any word I have yet heard your lordship speak, and reason it is you should be answered. Touching my peers, it is but necessary to say, that Mistress Martha Trapbois will none of them, whether clerical or laic. The captain hath asked her, so hath the parson, but she will none of them: she looks higher than either, and is, to say truth, a woman of sense, and so forth, too profound, and of spirit something too high, to put up with greasy buff or rusty primella. For ourselves, we need but hint that we have a consort in the land of the living, and, what is more to purpose,

Mrs. Martha knows it. So, as she will not lace her kersey hood save with a quality binding, you, my lord, must be the man, and must carry off fifty thousand decuses, the spoils of five thousand bullies, cutters, and spendthrifts, always deducting from the main sum some five thousand pounds for our princely advice and countenance, without which, as matters stand in Alsatia, you would find it hard to win the plate.'

'But has your wisdom considered, sir,' replied Glenvarloch, 'how this wedlock can serve me in my present emergence?'

'As for that, my lord,' said Duke Hildebrod, 'if, with forty or fifty thousand pounds in your pouch, you cannot save yourself, you will deserve to lose your head for your folly, and your hand for being close-fisted.'

'But, since your goodness has taken my matters into such serious consideration,' continued Nigel, who conceived there was no prudence in breaking with a man who, in his way, meant him favour rather than offence, 'perhaps you may be able to tell me how my kindred will be likely to receive such a bride as you recommend to me?'

'Touching that matter, my lord, I have always heard your countrymen knew as well as other folks on which side their bread was buttered. And, truly, speaking from report, I know no place where fifty thousand pounds — fifty thousand pounds, I say — will make a woman more welcome than it is likely to do in your ancient kingdom. And, truly, saving the slight twist in her shoulder, Mrs. Martha Trapbois is a person of very awful and majestic appearance, and may, for aught I know, be come of better blood than any one wots of; for old Trapbois looks not over like to be her father, and her mother was a generous, liberal sort of woman.'

'I am afraid,' answered Nigel, 'that chance is rather too vague to assure her a gracious reception into an honourable house.'

'Why, then, my lord,' replied Hildebrod, 'I think it like she will be even with them; for I will venture to say, she has as much ill-nature as will make her a match for your whole clan.'

'That may inconvenience me a little,' replied Nigel.

'Not a whit — not a whit,' said the duke, fertile in expedients; 'if she should become rather intolerable, which is not unlikely, your honourable house, which I presume to be a castle, hath, doubtless, both turrets and dungeons, and ye may bestow your bonny bride in either the one or the other, and then you

know you will be out of hearing of her tongue, and she will be either above or below the contempt of your friends.'

'It is sagely counselled, most equitable sir,' replied Nigel, 'and such restraint would be a fit meed for her folly that gave me any power over her.'

'You entertain the project then, my lord?' said Duke Hildebrod.

'I must turn it in my mind for twenty-four hours,' said Nigel; 'and I will pray you so to order matters that I be not further interrupted by any visitors.'

'We will utter an edict to secure your privacy,' said the duke; 'and you do not think,' he added, lowering his voice to a commercial whisper, 'that ten thousand is too much to pay to the sovereign in name of wardship?'

'Ten thousand!' said Lord Glenvarloch; 'why, you said five thousand but now.'

'Aha! art avised of that?' said the duke, touching the side of his nose with his finger; 'nay, if you have marked me so closely, you are thinking on the case more nearly than I believed till you trapped me. Well — well, we will not quarrel about the consideration, as old Trapbois would call it; do you win and wear the dame; it will be no hard matter with your face and figure, and I will take care that no one interrupts you. I will have an edict from the senate as soon as they meet for their meridiem.'

So saying, Duke Hildebrod took his leave.

CHAPTER XXIV.

This is the time. Heaven's maiden sentinel
Hath quitted her high watch, the lesser spangles
Are paling one by one; give me the ladder
And the short lever; bid Anthony
Keep with his carabine the wicket-gate;
And do thou bare thy knife and follow me,
For we will in and do it. Darkness like this
Is dawning of our fortunes.

Old Play.

WHEN Duke Hildebrod had withdrawn, Nigel's first impulse was an irresistible feeling to laugh at the sage adviser, who would have thus connected him with age, ugliness, and ill-temper; but his next thought was pity for the unfortunate father and daughter, who, being the only persons possessed of wealth in this unhappy district, seemed like a wreck on the sea-shore of a barbarous country, only secured from plunder for the moment by the jealousy of the tribes among whom it had been cast. Neither could he help being conscious that his own residence here was upon conditions equally precarious, and that he was considered by the Alsations in the same light of a god-send on the Cornish coast, or a sickly but wealthy caravan travelling through the wilds of Africa, and emphatically termed by the nations of despoilers through whose regions it passes *dummalaſong*, which signifies a thing given to be devoured — a common prey to all men.

Nigel had already formed his own plan to extricate himself, at whatsoever risk, from his perilous and degrading situation; and, in order that he might carry it into instant execution, he only awaited the return of Lowestoffe's messenger. He expected him, however, in vain, and could only amuse himself by looking through such parts of his baggage as had been sent to him from his former lodgings, in order to select a small packet of the most necessary articles to take with him, in the event of his quitting his lodgings secretly and suddenly, as speed and privacy

would, he foresaw, be particularly necessary, if he meant to obtain an interview with the King, which was the course his spirit and his interest alike determined him to pursue.

While he was thus engaged, he found, greatly to his satisfaction, that Master Lowestoffe had transmitted not only his rapier and poniard, but a pair of pistols, which he had used in travelling, of a smaller and more convenient size than the large petronels, or horse pistols, which were then in common use, as being made for wearing at the girdle or in the pockets. Next to having stout and friendly comrades, a man is chiefly emboldened by finding himself well armed in case of need, and Nigel, who had thought with some anxiety on the hazard of trusting his life, if attacked, to the protection of the clumsy weapon with which Lowestoffe had equipped him, in order to complete his disguise, felt an emotion of confidence approaching to triumph as, drawing his own good and well-tried rapier, he wiped it with his handkerchief, examined its point, bent it once or twice against the ground to prove its well-known metal, and finally replaced it in the scabbard, the more hastily, that he heard a tap at the door of his chamber, and had no mind to be found vapouring in the apartment with his sword drawn.

It was his old host who entered, to tell him with many cringes that the price of his apartment was to be a crown per diem; and that, according to the custom of Whitefriars, the rent was always payable per advance, although he never scrupled to let the money lie till a week or fortnight, or even a month, in the hands of any honourable guest like Master Grahame, always upon some reasonable consideration for the use. Nigel got rid of the old dotard's intrusion by throwing down two pieces of gold, and requesting the accommodation of his present apartment for eight days, adding, however, he did not think he should tarry so long.

The miser, with a sparkling eye and a trembling hand, clutched fast the proffered coin, and, having balanced the pieces with exquisite pleasure on the extremity of his withered finger, began almost instantly to show that not even the possession of gold can gratify for more than an instant the very heart that is most eager in the pursuit of it. First, the pieces might be light; with hasty hand he drew a small pair of scales from his bosom and weighed them, first together, then separately, and smiled with glee as he saw them attain the due depression in the balance—a circumstance which might add to his profits, if it were true, as was currently reported, that little of the gold

coinage was current in Alsatia in a perfect state, and that none ever left the sanctuary in that condition.

Another fear then occurred to trouble the old miser's pleasure. He had been just able to comprehend that Nigel intended to leave the Friars sooner than the arrival of the term for which he had deposited the rent. This might imply an expectation of refunding, which, as a Scotch wag said, of all species of funding, jumped least in the old gentleman's humour. He was beginning to enter a hypothetical caveat on this subject, and to quote several reasons why no part of the money once consigned as room-rent could be repaid back on any pretence, without great hardship to the landlord, when Nigel, growing impatient, told him that the money was his absolutely, and without any intention on his part of resuming any of it; all he asked in return was the liberty of enjoying in private the apartment he had paid for. Old Trapbois, who had still at his tongue's end much of the smooth language by which, in his time, he had hastened the ruin of many a young spendthrift, began to launch out upon the noble and generous disposition of his new guest, until Nigel, growing impatient, took the old gentleman by the hand, and gently, yet irresistibly, leading him to the door of his chamber, put him out, but with such a decent and moderate exertion of his superior strength as to render the action in no shape indecorous, and, fastening the door, began to do that for his pistols which he had done for his favourite sword, examining with care the flints and locks, and reviewing the state of his small provision of ammunition.

In this operation he was a second time interrupted by a knocking at his door; he called upon the person to enter, having no doubt that it was Lowestoffe's messenger at length arrived. It was, however, the ungracious daughter of old Trapbois, who, muttering something about her father's mistake, laid down upon the table one of the pieces of gold which Nigel had just given to him, saying, that what she retained was the full rent for the term he had specified. Nigel replied, he had paid the money, and had no desire to receive it again.

'Do as you will with it, then,' replied his hostess, 'for there it lies, and shall lie for me. If you are fool enough to pay more than is reason, my father shall not be knave enough to take it.'

'But your father, mistress,' said Nigel — 'your father told me —'

'Oh, my father — my father,' said she, interrupting him —

'my father managed these affairs while he was able ; I manage them now, and that may in the long run be as well for both of us.'

She then looked on the table, and observed the weapons.

'You have arms, I see,' she said ; 'do you know how to use them ?'

'I should do so, mistress,' replied Nigel, 'for it has been my occupation.'

'You are a soldier, then ?' she demanded.

'No farther as yet than as every gentleman of my country is a soldier.'

'Ay, that is your point of honour — to cut the throats of the poor — a proper gentlemanlike occupation for those who should protect them !'

'I do not deal in cutting throats, mistress,' replied Nigel ; 'but I carry arms to defend myself, and my country if it needs me.'

'Ay,' replied Martha, 'it is fairly worded ; but men say you are as prompt as others in petty brawls, where neither your safety nor your country is in hazard ; and that had it not been so you would not have been in the sanctuary to-day.'

'Mistress,' returned Nigel, 'I should labour in vain to make you understand that a man's honour, which is, or should be, dearer to him than his life, may often call on and compel us to hazard our own lives, or those of others, on what would otherwise seem trifling contingencies.'

'God's law says nought of that,' said the female : 'I have only read there that "Thou shalt not kill." But I have neither time nor inclination to preach to you ; you will find enough of fighting here if you like it, and well if it come not to seek you when you are least prepared. Farewell for the present ; the charwoman will execute your commands for your meals.'

She left the room, just as Nigel, provoked at her assuming a superior tone of judgment and of censure, was about to be so superfluous as to enter into a dispute with an old pawnbroker's daughter on the subject of the point of honour. He smiled at himself for the folly into which the spirit of self-vindication had so nearly hurried him.

Lord Glenvarloch then applied to old Deborah the charwoman, by whose intermediation he was provided with a tolerably decent dinner ; and the only embarrassment which he experienced was from the almost forcible entry of the old dotard, his landlord, who insisted upon giving his assistance at

laying the cloth. Nigel had some difficulty to prevent him from displacing his arms and some papers which were lying on the small table at which he had been sitting; and nothing short of a stern and positive injunction to the contrary could compel him to use another board, though there were two in the room, for the purpose of laying the cloth.

Having at length obliged him to relinquish his purpose, he could not help observing that the eyes of the old dotard seemed still anxiously fixed upon the small table on which lay his sword and pistols; and that, amidst all the little duties which he seemed officiously anxious to render to his guest, he took every opportunity of looking towards and approaching these objects of his attention. At length, when Trapbois thought he had completely avoided the notice of his guest, Nigel, through the observation of one of the cracked mirrors, on which channel of communication the old man had not calculated, beheld him actually extend his hand towards the table in question. He thought it unnecessary to use farther ceremony, but telling his landlord, in a stern voice, that he permitted no one to touch his arms, he commanded him to leave the apartment. The old usurer commenced a maundering sort of apology, in which all that Nigel distinctly apprehended was a frequent repetition of the word 'consideration,' and which did not seem to him to require any other answer than a reiteration of his command to him to leave the apartment, upon pain of worse consequences.

The ancient Hebe who acted as Lord Glenvarloch's cupbearer took his part against the intrusion of the still more antiquated Ganymede, and insisted on old Trapbois leaving the room instantly, menacing him at the same time with her mistress's displeasure if he remained there any longer. The old man seemed more under petticoat government than any other, for the threat of the charwoman produced greater effect upon him than the more formidable displeasure of Nigel. He withdrew grumbling and muttering, and Lord Glenvarloch heard him bar a large door at the nearer end of the gallery, which served as a division betwixt the other parts of the extensive mansion and the apartment occupied by his guest, which, as the reader is aware, had its access from the landing-place at the head of the grand staircase.

Nigel accepted the careful sound of the bolts and bars, as they were severally drawn by the trembling hand of old Trapbois, as an omen that the senior did not mean again to revisit

him in the course of the evening, and heartily rejoiced that he was at length to be left to uninterrupted solitude.

The old woman asked if there was aught else to be done for his accommodation ; and, indeed, it had hitherto seemed as if the pleasure of serving him, or more properly the reward which she expected, had renewed her youth and activity. Nigel desired to have candles, to have a fire lighted in his apartment, and a few fagots placed beside it, that he might feed it from time to time, as he began to feel the chilly effects of the damp and low situation of the house, close as it was to the Thames. But while the old woman was absent upon his errand, he began to think in what way he should pass the long solitary evening with which he was threatened.

His own reflections promised to Nigel little amusement, and less applause. He had considered his own perilous situation in every light in which it could be viewed, and foresaw as little utility as comfort in resuming the survey. To divert the current of his ideas, books were, of course, the readiest resource ; and although, like most of us, Nigel had, in his time, sauntered through large libraries, and even spent a long time there without greatly disturbing their learned contents, he was now in a situation where the possession of a volume, even of very inferior merit, becomes a real treasure. The old housewife returned shortly afterwards with fagots, and some pieces of half-burnt wax-candles, the perquisites, probably, real or usurped, of some experienced groom of the chambers, two of which she placed in large brass candlesticks, of different shapes and patterns, and laid the others on the table, that Nigel might renew them from time to time as they burnt to the socket. She heard with interest Lord Glenvarloch's request to have a book — any sort of book — to pass away the night withal, and returned for answer, that she knew of no other books in the house than her young mistress's (as she always denominated Mistress Martha Trapbois) Bible, which the owner would not lend ; and her master's *Whetstone of Witte, being the second part of Arithmetic, by Robert Record, with the Cossike Practice and Rule of Equation*, which promising volume Nigel declined to borrow. She offered, however, to bring some books from Duke Hildebrod — 'who sometimes, good gentleman, gave a glance at a book when the state affairs of Alsatia left him as much leisure.'

Nigel embraced the proposal, and his unwearied Iris scuttled away on this second embassy. She returned in a short time with a tattered quarto volume under her arm, and a pottle of

sack in her hand ; for the duke, judging that mere reading was dry work, had sent the wine by way of sauce to help it down, not forgetting to add the price to the morning's score which he had already run up against the stranger in the sanctuary.

Nigel seized on the book, and did not refuse the wine, thinking that a glass or two, as it really proved to be of good quality, would be no bad interlude to his studies. He dismissed with thanks and assurance of reward the poor old drudge who had been so zealous in his service ; trimmed his fire and candles, and placed the easiest of the old arm-chairs in a convenient posture betwixt the fire and the table at which he had dined, and which now supported the measure of sack and the lights ; and thus accompanying his studies with such luxurious appliances as were in his power, he began to examine the only volume with which the ducal library of Alsatia had been able to supply him.

The contents, though of a kind generally interesting, were not well calculated to dispel the gloom by which he was surrounded. The book was entitled *God's Revenge against Murther*¹—not, as the bibliomaniacal reader may easily conjecture, the work which Reynolds published under that imposing name, but one of a much earlier date, printed and sold by old Wolfe ; and which, could a copy now be found, would sell for much more than its weight in gold.

Nigel had soon enough of the doleful tales which the book contains, and attempted one or two other modes of killing the evening. He looked out at window, but the night was rainy, with gusts of wind ; he tried to coax the fire, but the fagots were green, and smoked without burning ; and as he was naturally temperate, he felt his blood somewhat heated by the canary sack which he had already drunk, and had no farther inclination to that pastime. He next attempted to compose a memorial addressed to the King, in which he set forth his case and his grievances ; but, speedily stung with the idea that his supplication would be treated with scorn, he flung the scroll into the fire, and, in a sort of desperation, resumed the book which he had laid aside.

Nigel became more interested in the volume at the second than at the first attempt which he made to peruse it. The narratives, strange and shocking as they were to human feeling, possessed yet the interest of sorcery or of fascination, which rivets the attention by its awakening horrors. Much

¹ See Note 29.

was told of the strange and horrible acts of blood by which men, setting nature and humanity alike at defiance, had, for the thirst of revenge, the lust of gold, or the cravings of irregular ambition, broken into the tabernacle of life. Yet more surprising and mysterious tales were recounted of the mode in which such deeds of blood had come to be discovered and revenged. Animals — irrational animals — had told the secret, and birds of the air had carried the matter. The elements had seemed to betray the deed which had polluted them: earth had ceased to support the murderer's steps, fire to warm his frozen limbs, water to refresh his parched lips, air to relieve his gasping lungs. All, in short, bore evidence to the homicide's guilt. In other circumstances, the criminal's own awakened conscience pursued and brought him to justice; and in some narratives the grave was said to have yawned, that the ghost of the sufferer might call for revenge.

It was now wearing late in the night, and the book was still in Nigel's hands, when the tapestry which hung behind him flapped against the wall, and the wind produced by its motion waved the flame of the candles by which he was reading. Nigel started and turned round, in that excited and irritated state of mind which arose from the nature of his studies, especially at a period when a certain degree of superstition was inculcated as a point of religious faith. It was not without emotion that he saw the bloodless countenance, meagre form, and ghastly aspect of old Trapbois, once more in the very act of extending his withered hand towards the table which supported his arms. Convinced by this untimely apparition that something evil was meditated towards him, Nigel sprung up, seized his sword, drew it, and placing it at the old man's breast, demanded of him what he did in his apartment at so untimely an hour. Trapbois showed neither fear nor surprise, and only answered by some imperfect expressions, intimating he would part with his life rather than with his property; and Lord Glenvarloch, strangely embarrassed, knew not what to think of the intruder's motives, and still less how to get rid of him. As he again tried the means of intimidation, he was surprised by a second apparition from behind the tapestry in the person of the daughter of Trapbois, bearing a lamp in her hand. She also seemed to possess her father's insensibility to danger, for, coming close to Nigel, she pushed aside impetuously his naked sword, and even attempted to take it out of his hand.

'For shame,' she said, 'your sword on a man of eighty years and more! This the honour of a Scottish gentleman! Give it to me to make a spindle of.'

'Stand back,' said Nigel. 'I mean your father no injury; but I *will* know what has caused him to prowl this whole day, and even at this late hour, around my arms.'

'Your arms!' repeated she; 'alas! young man, the whole arms in the Tower of London are of little value to him, in comparison of this miserable piece of gold which I left this morning on the table of a young spendthrift, too careless to put what belonged to him into his own purse.'

So saying, she showed the piece of gold, which, still remaining on the table where she had left it, had been the bait that attracted old Trapbois so frequently to the spot; and which, even in the silence of the night, had so dwelt on his imagination, that he had made use of a private passage long disused to enter his guest's apartment, in order to possess himself of the treasure during his slumbers. He now exclaimed, at the highest tones of his cracked and feeble voice —

'It is mine — it is mine! He gave it to me for a consideration. I will die ere I part with my property!'

'It is indeed his own, mistress,' said Nigel, 'and I do entreat you to restore it to the person on whom I have bestowed it, and let me have my apartment in quiet.'

'I will account with you for it, then,' said the maiden, reluctantly giving to her father the morsel of Mammon, on which he darted as if his bony fingers had been the talons of a hawk seizing its prey; and then making a contented muttering and mumbling, like an old dog after he has been fed, and just when he is wheeling himself thrice round for the purpose of lying down, he followed his daughter behind the tapestry, through a little sliding-door, which was perceived when the hangings were drawn apart.

'This shall be properly fastened to-morrow,' said the daughter to Nigel, speaking in such a tone that her father, deaf, and engrossed by his acquisition, could not hear her; 'to-night I will continue to watch him closely. I wish you good repose.'

These few words, pronounced in a tone of more civility than she had yet made use of towards her lodger, contained a wish which was not to be accomplished, although her guest, presently after her departure, retired to bed.

There was a slight fever in Nigel's blood, occasioned by the

various events of the evening, which put him, as the phrase is, beside his rest. Perplexing and painful thoughts rolled on his mind like a troubled stream, and the more he laboured to lull himself to slumber, the farther he seemed from attaining his object. He tried all the resources common in such cases : kept counting from one to a thousand, until his head was giddy ; he watched the embers of the wood fire till his eyes were dazzled ; he listened to the dull moaning of the wind, the swinging and creaking of signs which projected from the houses, and the baying of here and there a homeless dog, till his very ear was weary.

Suddenly, however, amid this monotony, came a sound which startled him at once. It was a female shriek. He sat up in his bed to listen, then remembered he was in Alsatia, where brawls of every sort were current among the unruly inhabitants. But another scream, and another, and another, succeeded so close, that he was certain, though the noise was remote and sounded stifled, it must be in the same house with himself.

Nigel jumped up hastily, put on a part of his clothes, seized his sword and pistols, and ran to the door of his chamber. Here he plainly heard the screams redoubled, and, as he thought, the sounds came from the usurer's apartment. All access to the gallery was effectually excluded by the intermediate door, which the brave young lord shook with eager but vain impatience. But the secret passage occurred suddenly to his recollection. He hastened back to his room, and succeeded with some difficulty in lighting a candle, powerfully agitated by hearing the cries repeated, yet still more afraid lest they should sink into silence.

He rushed along the narrow and winding entrance, guided by the noise, which now burst more wildly on his ear ; and, while he descended a narrow staircase which terminated the passage, he heard the stifled voices of men, encouraging, as it seemed, each other. ' D—n her, strike her down — silence her — beat her brains out ! ' while the voice of his hostess, though now almost exhausted, was repeating the cry of ' murder,' and ' help.' At the bottom of the staircase was a small door, which gave way before Nigel as he precipitated himself upon the scene of action, a cocked pistol in one hand, a candle in the other, and his naked sword under his arm.

Two ruffians had, with great difficulty, overpowered, or, rather, were on the point of overpowering, the daughter of

Trapbois, whose resistance appeared to have been most desperate, for the floor was covered with fragments of her clothes and handfuls of her hair. It appeared that her life was about to be the price of her defence, for one villain had drawn a long clasp knife, when they were surprised by the entrance of Nigel, who, as they turned towards him, shot the fellow with the knife dead on the spot, and when the other advanced to him, hurled the candlestick at his head, and then attacked him with his sword. It was dark save some pale moonlight from the window ; and the ruffian, after firing a pistol without effect, and fighting a traverse or two with his sword, lost heart, made for the window, leaped over it, and escaped. Nigel fired his remaining pistol after him at a venture, and then called for light.

‘There is light in the kitchen,’ answered Martha Trapbois, with more presence of mind than could have been expected. ‘Stay, you know not the way ; I will fetch it myself. Oh ! my father — my poor father ! I knew it would come to this, and all along of the accursed gold ! They have MURDERED him !’

CHAPTER XXV

Death finds us 'mid our playthings, snatches us,
As a cross nurse might do a wayward child,
From all our toys and baubles. His rough call
Unlooses all our favourite ties on earth ;
And well if they are such as may be answer'd
In yonder world, where all is judged of truly.

Old Play.

IT was a ghastly scene which opened upon Martha Trapbois's return with a light. Her own haggard and austere features were exaggerated by all the desperation of grief, fear, and passion ; but the latter was predominant. On the floor lay the body of the robber, who had expired without a groan, while his blood, flowing plentifully, had crimsoned all around. Another body lay also there, on which the unfortunate woman precipitated herself in agony, for it was that of her unhappy father. In the next moment she started up, and exclaiming — 'There may be life yet!' strove to raise the body. Nigel went to her assistance, but not without a glance at the open window ; which Martha, as acute as if undisturbed either by passion or terror, failed not to interpret justly.

'Fear not,' she cried — 'fear not ; they are base cowards, to whom courage is as much unknown as mercy. If I had had weapons, I could have defended myself against them without assistance or protection. Oh ! my poor father ! protection comes too late for this cold and stiff corpse. He is dead — dead !'

While she spoke, they were attempting to raise the dead body of the old miser ; but it was evident, even from the feeling of the inactive weight and rigid joints, that life had forsaken her station. Nigel looked for a wound, but saw none. The daughter of the deceased, with more presence of mind than a daughter could at the time have been supposed capable of exerting, discovered the instrument of his murder — a sort of scarf, which had been drawn so tight round his throat as to

stifle his cries for assistance in the first instance, and afterwards to extinguish life.

She undid the fatal noose; and, laying the old man's body in the arms of Lord Glenvarloch, she ran for water, for spirits, for essences, in the vain hope that life might be only suspended. That hope proved indeed vain. She chafed his temples, raised his head, loosened his nightgown, for it seemed as if he had arisen from bed upon hearing the entrance of the villains, and, finally, opened with difficulty his fixed and closely-clenched hands, from one of which dropped a key, from the other the very piece of gold about which the unhappy man had been a little before so anxious, and which probably, in the impaired state of his mental faculties, he was disposed to defend with as desperate energy as if its amount had been necessary to his actual existence.

'It is in vain—it is in vain,' said the daughter, desisting from her fruitless attempts to recall the spirit which had been effectually dislodged, for the neck had been twisted by the violence of the murderers—'it is in vain; he is murdered. I always knew it would be thus, and now I witness it!'

She then snatched up the key and the piece of money, but it was only to dash them again on the floor, as she exclaimed, 'Accursed be ye both, for you are the causes of this deed!'

Nigel would have spoken—would have reminded her that measures should be instantly taken for the pursuit of the murderer who had escaped, as well as for her own security against his return; but she interrupted him sharply.

'Be silent,' she said—'be silent. Think you, the thoughts of my own heart are not enough to distract me, and with such a sight as this before me? I say, be silent,' she said again, and in a yet sterner tone. 'Can a daughter listen, and her father's murdered corpse lying on her knees?'

Lord Glenvarloch, however overpowered by the energy of her grief, felt not the less the embarrassment of his own situation. He had discharged both his pistols; the robber might return; he had probably other assistants besides the man who had fallen, and it seemed to him, indeed, as if he had heard a muttering beneath the windows. He explained hastily to his companion the necessity of procuring ammunition.

'You are right,' she said, somewhat contemptuously, 'and have ventured already more than ever I expected of man. Go, and shift for yourself, since that is your purpose; leave me to my fate.'

Without stopping for needless expostulation, Nigel hastened to his own room through the secret passage, furnished himself with the ammunition he sought for, and returned with the same celerity; wondering at the accuracy with which he achieved, in the dark, all the meanderings of the passage which he had traversed only once, and that in a moment of such violent agitation.

He found, on his return, the unfortunate woman standing like a statue by the body of her father, which she had laid straight on the floor, having covered the face with the skirt of his gown. She testified neither surprise nor pleasure at Nigel's return, but said to him calmly—'My moan is made—my sorrow—all the sorrow at least that man shall ever have noting of—is gone past; but I will have justice, and the base villain who murdered this poor defenceless old man, when he had not, by the course of nature, a twelvemonth's life in him, shall not cumber the earth long after him. Stranger, whom Heaven has sent to forward the revenge reserved for this action, go to Hildebrod's—there they are awake all night in their revels—bid him come hither; he is bound by his duty, and dare not, and shall not, refuse his assistance, which he knows well I can reward. Why do ye tarry?—go instantly.'

'I would,' said Nigel, 'but I am fearful of leaving you alone; the villains may return, and——'

'True—most true,' answered Martha, 'he may return; and, though I care little for his murdering me, he may possess himself of what has most tempted him. Keep this key and this piece of gold—they are both of importance; defend your life if assailed, and if you kill the villain I will make you rich. I go myself to call for aid.'

Nigel would have remonstrated with her, but she had departed, and in a moment he heard the house-door clank behind her. For an instant he thought of following her; but upon recollection that the distance was but short betwixt the tavern of Hildebrod and the house of Trapbois, he concluded that she knew it better than he, incurred little danger in passing it, and that he would do well in the meanwhile to remain on the watch as she recommended.

It was no pleasant situation for one unused to such scenes to remain in the apartment with two dead bodies, recently those of living and breathing men, who had both, within the space of less than half an hour, suffered violent death; one of them by the hand of the assassin, the other, whose blood still continued

to flow from the wound in his throat, and to flood all around him, by the spectator's own deed of violence, though of justice. He turned his face from those wretched relics of mortality with a feeling of disgust, mingled with superstition; and he found, when he had done so, that the consciousness of the presence of these ghastly objects, though unseen by him, rendered him more uncomfortable than even when he had his eyes fixed upon, and reflected by, the cold, staring, lifeless eyeballs of the deceased. Fancy also played her usual sport with him. He now thought he heard the well-worn damask nightgown of the deceased usurer rustle; anon, that he heard the slaughtered bravo draw up his leg, the boot scratching the floor as if he was about to rise; and again he deemed he heard the footsteps and the whisper of the returned ruffian under the window from which he had lately escaped. To face the last and most real danger, and to parry the terrors which the other class of feelings were like to impress upon him, Nigel went to the window, and was much cheered to observe the light of several torches illuminating the street, and followed, as the murmur of voices denoted, by a number of persons, armed, it would seem, with firelocks and halberds, and attendant on Hildebrod, who (not in his fantastic office of duke, but in that which he really possessed of bailiff of the liberty and sanctuary of Whitefriars) was on his way to inquire into the crime and its circumstances.

It was a strange and melancholy contrast to see these debauchees, disturbed in the very depth of their midnight revel, on their arrival at such a scene as this. They stared on each other, and on the bloody work before them, with lack-lustre eyes; staggered with uncertain steps over boards slippery with blood; their noisy brawling voices sunk into stammering whispers; and, with spirits quelled by what they saw, while their brains were still stupified by the liquor which they had drunk, they seemed like men walking in their sleep.

Old Hildebrod was an exception to the general condition. That seasoned cask, however full, was at all times capable of motion, when there occurred a motive sufficiently strong to set him a-rolling. He seemed much shocked at what he beheld, and his proceedings, in consequence, had in them more of regularity and propriety than he might have been supposed capable of exhibiting upon any occasion whatever. The daughter was first examined, and stated, with wonderful accuracy and distinctness, the manner in which she had been alarmed with a noise of struggling and violence in her father's apartment, and

that the more readily, because she was watching him on account of some alarm concerning his health. On her entrance, she had seen her father sinking under the strength of two men, upon whom she rushed with all the fury she was capable of. As their faces were blackened and their figures disguised, she could not pretend, in the hurry of a moment so dreadfully agitating, to distinguish either of them as persons whom she had seen before. She remembered little more except the firing of shots, until she found herself alone with her guest, and saw that the ruffian had escaped.

Lord Glenvarloch told his story as we have given it to the reader. The direct evidence thus received, Hildebrod examined the promises. He found that the villains had made their entrance by the window out of which the survivor had made his escape; yet it seemed singular that they should have done so, as it was secured with strong iron bars, which old Trapbois was in the habit of shutting with his own hand at nightfall. He minuted down with great accuracy the state of everything in the apartment, and examined carefully the features of the slain robber. He was dressed like a seaman of the lowest order, but his face was known to none present. Hildebrod next sent for an Alsatian surgeon, whose vices, undoing what his skill might have done for him, had consigned him to the wretched practise of this place. He made him examine the dead bodies, and make a proper declaration of the manner in which the sufferers seemed to have come by their end. The circumstance of the sash did not escape the learned judge, and having listened to all that could be heard or conjectured on the subject, and collected all particulars of evidence which appeared to bear on the bloody transaction, he commanded the door of the apartment to be locked until next morning: and carrying the unfortunate daughter of the murdered man into the kitchen, where there was no one in presence but Lord Glenvarloch, he asked her gravely, whether she suspected no one in particular of having committed the deed.

‘Do you suspect no one?’ answered Martha, looking fixedly on him.

‘Perhaps I may, mistress; but it is my part to ask questions, yours to answer them. That’s the rule of the game.’

‘Then I suspect him who wore yonder sash. Do not you know whom I mean?’

‘Why, if you call on me for honours, I must needs say I

have seen Captain Peppercull have one of such a fashion, and he was not a man to change his suits often.'

'Send out, then,' said Martha, 'and have him apprehended.'

'If it is he, he will be far by this time; but I will communicate with the higher powers,' answered the judge.

'You would have him escape,' resumed she, fixing her eyes on him sternly.

'By cock and pie,' replied Hildebrod, 'did it depend on me, the murdering cut-throat should hang as high as ever Haman did; but let me take my time. He has friends among us, *that* you wot well; and all that should assist me are as drunk as fiddlers.'

'I will have revenge—I *will* have it,' repeated she; 'and take heed you trifle not with me.'

'Trifle! I would sooner trifle with a she-bear the minute after they had baited her. I tell you, mistress, be but patient, and we will have him. I know all his haunts, and he cannot forbear them long; and I will have trap-doors open for him. You cannot want justice, mistress, for you have the means to get it.'

'They who help me in my revenge,' said Martha, 'shall share these means.'

'Enough said,' replied Hildebrod; 'and now I would have you go to my house and get something hot: you will be but dreary here by yourself.'

'I will send for the old charwoman,' replied Martha, 'and we have the stranger gentleman, besides.'

'Umph—umph, the stranger gentleman!' said Hildebrod to Nigel, whom he drew a little apart. 'I fancy the captain has made the stranger gentleman's fortune when he was making a bold dash for his own. I can tell your honour—I must not say lordship—that I think my having chanced to give the greasy buff-and-iron scoundrel some hint of what I recommended to you to-day has put him on this rough game. The better for you: you will get the cash without the father-in-law. You will keep conditions, I trust?'

'I wish you had said nothing to any one of a scheme so absurd,' said Nigel.

'Absurd! Why, think you she will not have thee? Take her with the tear in her eye, man—take her with the tear in her eye. Let me hear from you to-morrow. Good-night, good-night; a nod is as good as a wink. I must to my business of sealing and locking up. By the way, this horrid work has

put all out of my head. Here is a fellow from Mr. Lowestoffe has been asking to see you. As he said his business was express, the senate only made him drink a couple of flagons, and he was just coming to beat up your quarters when this breeze blew up. Ahey, friend! there is Master Nigel Grahame.'

A young man, dressed in a green plush jerkin, with a badge on the sleeve, and having the appearance of a waterman, approached and took Nigel aside, while Duke Hildebrod went from place to place to exercise his authority, and to see the windows fastened and the doors of the apartment locked up. The news communicated by Lowestoffe's messenger were not the most pleasant. They were intimated in a courteous whisper to Nigel, to the following effect:—That Master Lowestoffe prayed him to consult his safety by instantly leaving Whitefriars, for that a warrant from the Lord Chief Justice had been issued out for apprehending him, and would be put in force to-morrow, by the assistance of a party of musketeers, a force which the Alsatians neither would nor dared to resist.

'And so, squire,' said the aquatic emissary, 'my wherry is to wait you at the Temple Stairs yonder, at five this morning, and, if you would give the bloodhounds the slip, why, you may.'

'Why did not Master Lowestoffe write to me?' said Nigel.

'Alas! the good gentleman lies up in lavender for it himself, and has as little to do with pen and ink as if he were a parson.'

'Did he send any token to me?' said Nigel.

'Token! ay, marry did he—token enough, an I have not forgot it,' said the fellow; then, giving a hoist to the waistband of his breeches, he said, 'Ay, I have it: you were to believe me, because your name was written with an O for Grahame. Ay, that was it, I think. Well, shall we meet in two hours, when tide turns, and go down the river like a twelve-oared barge?'

'Where is the King just now, knowest thou?' answered Lord Glenvarloch.

'The King! why, he went down to Greenwich yesterday by water, like a noble sovereign as he is, who will always float where he can. He was to have hunted this week, but that purpose is broken, they say; and the Prince, and the Duke, and all of them at Greenwich, are as merry as minnows.'

'Well,' replied Nigel, 'I will be ready to go at five; do thou come hither to carry my baggage.'

'Ay — ay, master,' replied the fellow, and left the house, mixing himself with the disorderly attendants of Duke Hildebrod, who were now retiring. The potentate entreated Nigel to make fast the doors behind him, and, pointing to the female who sat by the expiring fire with her limbs outstretched, like one whom the hand of death had already arrested, he whispered, 'Mind your hits, and mind your bargain, or I will cut your bowstring for you before you can draw it.'

Feeling deeply the ineffable brutality which could recommend the prosecuting such views over a wretch in such a condition, Lord Glenvarloch yet commanded his temper so far as to receive the advice in silence, and attend to the former part of it, by barring the door carefully behind Duke Hildebrod and his suite, with the tacit hope that he should never again see or hear of them. He then returned to the kitchen, in which the unhappy woman remained, her hands still clenched, her eyes fixed, and her limbs extended, like those of a person in a trance. Much moved by her situation, and with the prospect which lay before her, he endeavoured to awaken her to existence by every means in his power, and at length apparently succeeded in dispelling her stupor and attracting her attention. He then explained to her that he was in the act of leaving Whitefriars in a few hours, that his future destination was uncertain, but that he desired anxiously to know whether he could contribute to her protection by apprising any friend of her situation, or otherwise. With some difficulty she seemed to comprehend his meaning, and thanked him with her usual short ungracious manner. 'He might mean well,' she said, 'but he ought to know that the miserable had no friends.'

Nigel said, 'He would not willingly be importunate, but, as he was about to leave the Friars ——'

She interrupted him — 'You are about to leave the Friars? I will go with you.'

'You go with me!' exclaimed Lord Glenvarloch.

'Yes,' she said, 'I will persuade my father to leave this murdering den.' But, as she spoke, the more perfect recollection of what had passed crowded on her mind. She hid her face in her hands, and burst out into a dreadful fit of sobs, moans, and lamentations, which terminated in hysterics, violent in proportion to the uncommon strength of her body and mind.

Lord Glenvarloch, shocked, confused, and inexperienced, was about to leave the house in quest of medical, or at least female,

assistance ; but the patient, when the paroxysm had somewhat spent its force, held him fast by the sleeve with one hand, covering her face with the other, while a copious flood of tears came to relieve the emotions of grief by which she had been so violently agitated.

‘Do not leave me,’ she said — ‘do not leave me, and call no one. I have never been in this way before, and would not now,’ she said, sitting upright, and wiping her eyes with her apron — ‘would not now — but that — but that he loved *me*, if he loved nothing else that was human. To die so, and by such hands !’

And again the unhappy woman gave way to a paroxysm of sorrow, mingling her tears with sobbing, wailing, and all the abandonment of female grief, when at its utmost height. At length, she gradually recovered the austerity of her natural composure, and maintained it as if by a forcible exertion of resolution, repelling, as she spoke, the repeated returns of the hysterical affection, by such an effort as that by which epileptic patients are known to suspend the recurrence of their fits. Yet her mind, however resolved, could not so absolutely overcome the affection of her nerves but that she was agitated by strong fits of trembling, which, for a minute or two at a time, shook her whole frame in a manner frightful to witness. Nigel forgot his own situation, and, indeed, everything else, in the interest inspired by the unhappy woman before him — an interest which affected a proud spirit the more deeply, that she herself, with correspondent highness of mind, seemed determined to owe as little as possible either to the humanity or the pity of others.

‘I am not wont to be in this way,’ she said ; ‘but — but — nature will have power over the frail beings it has made. Over you, sir, I have some right ; for, without you, I had not survived this awful night. I wish your aid had been either earlier or later ; but you *have* saved my life, and you are bound to assist in making it endurable to me.’

‘If you will show me how it is possible,’ answered Nigel.

‘You are going hence, you say, instantly ; carry me with you,’ said the unhappy woman. ‘By my own efforts, I shall never escape from this wilderness of guilt and misery.’

‘Alas ! what can I do for you ?’ replied Nigel. ‘My own way, and I must not deviate from it, leads me, in all probability, to a dungeon. I might, indeed, transport you from hence with me, if you could afterwards bestow yourself with any friend.’

‘Friend !’ she exclaimed, ‘I have no friend ; they have long

since discarded us. A spectre arising from the dead were more welcome than I should be at the doors of those who have disclaimed us; and, if they were willing to restore their friendship to me now, I would despise it, because they withdrew it from him — from him (here she underwent strong but suppressed agitation, and then added firmly) — from *him* who lies yonder. I have no friend.' Here she paused; and then, suddenly, as if recollecting herself, added, 'I have no friend; but I have that will purchase many — I have that which will purchase both friends and avengers. It is well thought of; I must not leave it for a prey to cheats and ruffians. Stranger, you must return to yonder room. Pass through it boldly to his — that is, to the sleeping-apartment; push the bedstead aside; beneath each of the posts is a brass plate, as if to support the weight, but it is that upon the left, nearest to the wall, which must serve your turn; press the corner of the plate, and it will spring up and show a keyhole, which this key will open. You will then lift a concealed trap-door, and in a cavity of the floor you will discover a small chest. Bring it hither; it shall accompany our journey, and it will be hard if the contents cannot purchase me a place of refuge.'

'But the door communicating with the kitchen has been locked by these people,' said Nigel.

'True, I had forgot; they had their reasons for that, doubtless,' answered she. 'But the secret passage from your apartment is open, and you may go that way.'

Lord Glenvarloch took the key, and, as he lighted a lamp to show him the way, she read in his countenance some unwillingness to the task imposed.

'You fear?' she said. 'There is no cause: the murderer and his victim are both at rest. Take courage, I will go with you myself; you cannot know the trick of the spring, and the chest will be too heavy for you.'

'No fear — no fear,' answered Lord Glenvarloch, ashamed of the construction she put upon a momentary hesitation, arising from a dislike to look upon what is horrible, often connected with those high-wrought minds which are the last to fear what is merely dangerous. 'I will do your errand as you desire; but for you, you must not — cannot go yonder.'

'I can — I will,' she said. 'I am composed. You shall see that I am so.' She took from the table a piece of unfinished sewing-work, and, with steadiness and composure, passed a silken thread into the eye of a fine needle. 'Could I have done

CHAPTER XXVI

Give us good voyage, gentle stream. We stun not
Thy sober ear with sounds of revelry,
Wake not the slumbering echoes of thy banks
With voice of flute and horn ; we do but seek
On the broad pathway of thy swelling bosom
To glide in silent safety.

The Double Bridle.

GREY, or rather yellow, light was beginning to twinkle through the fogs of Whitefriars, when a low tap at the door of the unhappy miser announced to Lord Glenvarloch the summons of the boatman. He found at the door the man whom he had seen the night before, with a companion.

‘Come — come, master, let us get afloat,’ said one of them, in a rough impressive whisper, ‘time and tide wait for no man.’

‘They shall not wait for me,’ said Lord Glenvarloch ; ‘but I have some things to carry with me.’

‘Ay — ay, no man will take a pair of oars now, Jack, unless he means to load the wherry like a six-horse waggon. When they don’t want to shift the whole kitt, they take a sculler, and be d—d to them. Come — come, where be your rattle-traps ?’

One of the men was soon sufficiently loaded, in his own estimation at least, with Lord Glenvarloch’s mail and its accompaniments, with which burden he began to trudge towards the Temple Stairs. His comrade, who seemed the principal, began to handle the trunk which contained the miser’s treasure, but pitched it down again in an instant, declaring, with a great oath, that it was as reasonable to expect a man to carry Paul’s on his back. The daughter of Trapbois, who had by this time joined them, muffled up in a long dark hood and mantle, exclaimed to Lord Glenvarloch — ‘Let them leave it if they will — let them leave it all ; let us but escape from this horrible place.’

We have mentioned somewhere that Nigel was a very athletic

young man, and, impelled by a strong feeling of compassion and indignation, he showed his bodily strength singularly on this occasion, by seizing on the ponderous strong-box, and, by means of the rope he had cast around it, throwing it on his shoulders, and marching resolutely forward under a weight which would have sunk to the earth three young gallants, at the least, of our degenerate day. The waterman followed him in amazement, calling out, 'Why, master — master, you might as well gie me t' other end on 't!' and anon offered his assistance to support it in some degree behind, which, after the first minute or two, Nigel was fain to accept. His strength was almost exhausted when he reached the wherry, which was lying at the Temple Stairs according to appointment; and, when he pitched the trunk into it, the weight sank the bow of the boat so low in the water as wellnigh to upset it.

'We shall have as hard a fare of it,' said the waterman to his companion, 'as if we were ferrying over an honest bankrupt with all his secreted goods. Ho, ho! good woman, what are you stepping in for? our gunwale lies deep enough in the water without live lumber to boot.

'This person comes with me,' said Lord Glenvarloch; 'she is for the present under my protection.'

'Come — come, master,' rejoined the fellow, 'that is out of my commission. You must not double my freight on me. She may go by the land; and, as for protection, her face will protect her from Berwick to the Land's End.'

'You will not except at my doubling the loading if I double the fare?' said Nigel, determined on no account to relinquish the protection of this unhappy woman, for which he had already devised some sort of plan, likely now to be baffled by the characteristic rudeness of the Thames watermen.

'Ay, by G—, but I will except though,' said the fellow with the green plush jacket. 'I will overload my wherry neither for love nor money. I love my boat as well as my wife, and a thought better.'

'Nay — nay, comrade,' said his mate, 'that is speaking no true water language. For double fare we are bound to row a witch in her eggshell if she bid us; and so pull away, Jack, and let us have no more prating.'

They got into the stream-way accordingly, and, although heavily laden, began to move down the river with reasonable speed.

The lighter vessels which passed, overtook, or crossed them,

in their course, failed not to assail them with the boisterous raillery which was then called water-wit ; for which the extreme plainness of Mistress Martha's features, contrasted with the youth, handsome figure, and good looks of Nigel, furnished the principal topics ; while the circumstance of the boat being somewhat overloaded did not escape their notice. They were hailed successively as a grocer's wife upon a party of pleasure with her eldest apprentice ; as an old woman carrying her grandson to school ; and as a young strapping Irishman, conveying an ancient maiden to Dr. Rigmartole's at Redriffe, who buckles beggars for a tester and a dram of Geneva. All this abuse was retorted in a similar strain of humour by Green-Jacket and his companion, who maintained the war of wit with the same alacrity with which they were assailed.

Meanwhile, Lord Glenvarloch asked his desolate companion if she had thought on any place where she could remain in safety with her property. She confessed, in more detail than formerly, that her father's character had left her no friends ; and that, from the time he had betaken himself to Whitefriars, to escape certain legal consequences of his eager pursuit of gain, she had lived a life of total seclusion ; not associating with the society which the place afforded, and, by her residence there, as well as her father's parsimony, effectually cut off from all other company. What she now wished, was, in the first place, to obtain the shelter of a decent lodging, and the countenance of honest people, however low in life, until she should obtain legal advice as to the mode of obtaining justice on her father's murderer. She had no hesitation to charge the guilt upon Colepepper, commonly called Peppercull, whom she knew to be as capable of any act of treacherous cruelty as he was cowardly where actual manhood was required. He had been strongly suspected of two robberies before, one of which was coupled with an atrocious murder. He had, she intimated, made pretensions to her hand as the easiest and safest way of obtaining possession of her father's wealth ; and, on her refusing his addresses, if they could be termed so, in the most positive terms, he had thrown out such obscure hints of vengeance as, joined with some imperfect assaults upon the house, had kept her in frequent alarm, both on her father's account and her own.

Nigel, but that his feeling of respectful delicacy to the unfortunate woman forbade him to do so, could here have communicated a circumstance corroborative of her suspicions, which had already occurred to his own mind. He recollected the hint

that old Hildebrod threw forth on the preceding night, that some communication betwixt himself and Colepepper had hastened the catastrophe. As this communication related to the plan which Hildebrod had been pleased to form of promoting a marriage betwixt Nigel himself and the rich heiress of Trapbois, the fear of losing an opportunity not to be regained, together with the mean malignity of a low-bred ruffian, disappointed in a favourite scheme, was most likely to instigate the bravo to the deed of violence which had been committed. The reflection, that his own name was in some degree implicated with the causes of this horrid tragedy, doubled Lord Glenvarloch's anxiety in behalf of the victim whom he had rescued, while at the same time he formed the tacit resolution that, so soon as his own affairs were put upon some footing, he would contribute all in his power towards the investigation of this bloody affair.

After ascertaining from his companion that she could form no better plan of her own, he recommended to her to take up her lodging for the time at the house of his old landlord, Christie, the ship-chandler, at Paul's Wharf, describing the decency and honesty of that worthy couple, and expressing his hopes that they would receive her into their own house, or recommend her at least to that of some person for whom they would be responsible, until she should have time to enter upon other arrangements for herself.

The poor woman received advice so grateful to her in her desolate condition with an expression of thanks, brief indeed, but deeper than anything had yet extracted from the austerity of her natural disposition.

Lord Glenvarloch then proceeded to inform Martha that certain reasons, connected with his personal safety, called him immediately to Greenwich, and, therefore, it would not be in his power to accompany her to Christie's house, which he would otherwise have done with pleasure; but, tearing a leaf from his tablet, he wrote on it a few lines, addressed to his landlord, as a man of honesty and humanity, in which he described the bearer as a person who stood in singular necessity of temporary protection and good advice, for which her circumstances enabled her to make ample acknowledgment. He therefore requested John Christie, as his old and good friend, to afford her the shelter of his roof for a short time; or, if that might not be consistent with his convenience, at least to direct her to a proper lodging; and, finally, he imposed on him the addi-

tional, and somewhat more difficult, commission to recommend her to the counsel and services of an honest, at least a reputable and skilful, attorney, for the transacting some law business of importance. This note he subscribed with his real name, and, delivering it to his *protégée*, who received it with another deeply uttered 'I thank you,' which spoke the sterling feelings of her gratitude better than a thousand combined phrases, he commanded the watermen to pull in for Paul's Wharf, which they were now approaching.

'We have not time,' said Green-Jacket; 'we cannot be stopping every instant.'

But, upon Nigel insisting upon his commands being obeyed, and adding, that it was for the purpose of putting the lady ashore, the waterman declared he would rather have her room than her company, and put the wherry alongside of the wharf accordingly. Here two of the porters, who ply in such places, were easily induced to undertake the charge of the ponderous strong-box, and at the same time to guide the owner to the well-known mansion of John Christie, with whom all who lived in that neighbourhood were perfectly acquainted.

The boat, much lightened of its load, went down the Thames at a rate increased in proportion. But we must forbear to pursue her in her voyage for a few minutes, since we have previously to mention the issue of Lord Glenvarloch's recommendation.

Mistress Martha Trapbois reached the shop in perfect safety, and was about to enter it, when a sickening sense of the uncertainty of her situation, and of the singularly painful task of telling her story, came over her so strongly, that she paused a moment at the very threshold of her proposed place of refuge, to think in what manner she could best second the recommendation of the friend whom Providence had raised up to her. Had she possessed that knowledge of the world from which her habits of life had completely excluded her, she might have known that the large sum of money which she brought along with her might, judiciously managed, have been a passport to her into the mansions of nobles and the palaces of princes. But, however conscious of its general power, which assumes so many forms and complexions, she was so inexperienced as to be most unnecessarily afraid that the means by which the wealth had been acquired might exclude its inheritor from shelter even in the house of a humble tradesman.

While she thus delayed, a more reasonable cause for hesita-

tion arose, in a considerable noise and altercation within the house, which grew louder and louder as the disputants issued forth upon the street or lane before the door.

The first who entered upon the scene was a tall, raw-boned, hard-favoured man, who stalked out of the shop hastily, with a gait like that of a Spaniard in a passion, who, disdaining to add speed to his locomotion by running, only condescends, in the utmost extremity of his angry haste, to add length to his stride. He faced about, so soon as he was out of the house, upon his pursuer, a decent-looking, elderly, plain tradesman — no less than John Christie himself, the owner of the shop and tenement, by whom he seemed to be followed, and who was in a state of agitation more than is usually expressed by such a person.

‘I’ll hear no more on’t,’ said the personage who first appeared on the scene — ‘sir, I will hear no more on it. Besides being a most false and impudent figment, as I can testify, it is *scandalum magnaatum*, sir — *scandalum magnaatum*,’ he reiterated with a broad accentuation of the first vowel, well known in the colleges of Edinburgh and Glasgow, which we can only express in print by doubling the said first of letters and of vowels, and which would have cheered the cockles of the reigning monarch had he been within hearing — as he was a severer stickler for what he deemed the genuine pronunciation of the Roman tongue than for any of the royal prerogatives, for which he was at times disposed to insist so strenuously in his speeches to Parliament.

‘I care not an ounce of rotten cheese,’ said John Christie in reply, ‘what you call it — but it is TRUE; and I am a free Englishman, and have right to speak the truth in my own concerns; and your master is little better than a villain, and you no more than a swaggering coxcomb, whose head I will presently break, as I have known it well broken before on lighter occasion.’

And so saying, he flourished the paring shovel which usually made clean the steps of his little shop, and which he had caught up as the readiest weapon of working his foeman damage, and advanced therewith upon him. The cautious Scot, for such our readers must have already pronounced him, from his language and pedantry, drew back as the enraged ship-chandler approached, but in a surly manner, and bearing his hand on his sword-hilt rather in the act of one who was losing habitual forbearance and caution of deportment than as alarmed by the

attack of an antagonist inferior to himself in youth, strength, and weapons.

'Bide back,' he said, 'Maister Christie—I say, bide back, and consult your safety, man. I have evited striking you in your ain house under muckle provocation, because I am ignorant how the laws here may pronounce respecting burglary and hame-sucken, and such matters; and, besides, I would not willingly hurt ye, man, e'en on the causeway, that is free to us baith, because I mind your kindness of lang syne, and partly consider ye as a poor deceived creature. But deil d—n me, sir, and I am not wont to swear, but if you touch my Scotch shouther with that shule of yours, I will make six inches of my Andrew Ferrara deevilish intimate with your guts, neighbour.'

And therewithal, though still retreating from the brandished shovel, he made one-third of the basket-hilted broadsword which he wore visible from the sheath. The wrath of John Christie was abated, either by his natural temperance of disposition, or perhaps in part by the glimmer of cold steel, which flashed on him from his adversary's last action.

'I would do well to cry clubs on thee, and have thee ducked at the wharf,' he said, grounding his shovel, however, at the same time, 'for a paltry swaggerer, that would draw thy bit of iron there on an honest citizen before his own door; but get thee gone, and reckon on a salt eel for thy supper, if thou shouldst ever come near my house again. I wish it had been at the bottom of Thames when it first gave the use of its roof to smooth-faced, oily-tongued, double-minded Scots thieves!'

'It's an ill bird that fouls its own nest,' replied his adversary, not perhaps the less bold that he saw matters were taking the turn of a pacific debate; 'and a pity it is that a kindly Scot should ever have married in foreign parts, and given life to a purse-proud, pudding-headed, fat-gutted, lean-brained Southron, e'en such as you, Maister Christie. But fare ye weel—fare ye weel, for ever and a day; and, if you quarrel wi' a Scot again, man, say as mickle ill o' himsell as you like, but say nane of his patron or of his countrymen, or it will scarce be your flat cap that will keep your lang lugs from the sharp abridgment of a Highland whinger, man.'

'And, if you continue your insolence to me before my own door, were it but two minutes longer,' retorted John Christie, 'I will call the constable, and make your Scottish ankles acquainted with an English pair of stocks!'

So saying, he turned to retire into his shop with some show of victory ; for his enemy, whatever might be his innate valour, manifested no desire to drive matters to extremity — conscious, perhaps, that whatever advantage he might gain in single combat with John Christie would be more than overbalanced by incurring an affair with the constituted authorities of Old England, not at that time apt to be particularly favourable to their new fellow-subjects, in the various successive broils which were then constantly taking place between the individuals of two proud nations, who still retained a stronger sense of their national animosity during centuries than of their late union for a few years under the government of the same prince.

Mrs. Martha Trapbois had dwelt too long in Alsatia to be either surprised or terrified at the altercation she had witnessed. Indeed, she only wondered that the debate did not end in some of those acts of violence by which they were usually terminated in the sanctuary. As the disputants separated from each other, she, who had no idea that the cause of the quarrel was more deeply rooted than in the daily scenes of the same nature which she had heard of or witnessed, did not hesitate to stop Master Christie in his return to his shop, and present to him the letter which Lord Glenvarloch had given to her. Had she been better acquainted with life and its business, she would certainly have waited for a more temperate moment ; and she had reason to repent of her precipitation, when, without saying a single word, or taking the trouble to gather more of the information contained in the letter than was expressed in the subscription, the incensed ship-chandler threw it down on the ground, trampled it in high disdain, and, without addressing a single word to the bearer, except, indeed, something much more like a hearty curse than was perfectly consistent with his own grave appearance, he retired into his shop and shut the hatch-door.

It was with the most inexpressible anguish that the desolate, friendless, and unhappy female thus beheld her sole hope of succour, countenance, and protection vanish at once, without being able to conceive a reason ; for, to do her justice, the idea that her friend, whom she knew by the name of Nigel Grahame, had imposed on her — a solution which might readily have occurred to many in her situation — never once entered her mind. Although it was not her temper easily to bend her mind to entreaty, she could not help exclaiming after the ireful and retreating ship-chandler—‘ Good Master, hear me but a moment ! for mercy’s sake, for honesty’s sake ! ’

'Mercy and honesty from him, mistress!' said the Scot, who, though he essayed not to interrupt the retreat of his antagonist, still kept stout possession of the field of action; 'ye might as weel expect brandy from bean-stalks, or milk from a crag of blue whunstone. The man is mad — horn mad, to boot.'

'I must have mistaken the person to whom the letter was addressed, then'; and, as she spoke, Mistress Martha Trapbois was in the act of stooping to lift the paper which had been so uncourteously received. Her companion, with natural civility, anticipated her purpose; but, what was not quite so much in etiquette, he took a sly glance at it as he was about to hand it to her, and his eye having caught the subscription, he said, with surprise, 'Glenvarloch — Nigel Olifaunt of Glenvarloch! Do you know the Lord Glenvarloch, mistress?'

'I know not of whom you speak,' said Mrs. Martha, peevishly. 'I had that paper from one Master Nigel Gram.'

'Nigel Grahame! — umph. Oh, ay, very true — I had forgot,' said the Scotsman. 'A tall, well-set young man, about my height; bright blue eyes like a hawk's; a pleasant speech, something leaning to the kindly North-country accentuation, but not much, in respect of his having been resident abroad?'

'All this is true; and what of it all?' said the daughter of the miser.

'Hair of my complexion?'

'Yours is red,' replied she.

'I pray you peace,' said the Scotsman. 'I was going to say — of my complexion, but with a deeper shade of the chestnut. Weel, mistress, if I have guessed the man aright, he is one with whom I am, and have been, intimate and familiar — nay, I may truly say I have done him much service in my time, and may live to do him more. I had indeed a sincere good-will for him, and I doubt he has been much at a loss since we parted; but the fault is not mine. Wherefore, as this letter will not avail you with him to whom it is directed, you may believe that Heaven hath sent it to me, who have a special regard for the writer. I have, besides, as much mercy and honesty within me as man can weel make his bread with, and am willing to aid any distressed creature, that is my friend's friend, with my counsel, and otherwise, so that I am not put to much charges, being in a strange country, like a poor lamb that has wandered from its ain native hirsle, and leaves a tait of its woo' in every d—d Southron bramble that comes across it.' While he spoke thus, he read the contents of the letter, without waiting for

permission, and then continued — ‘And so this is all that you are wanting, my dove? nothing more than safe and honourable lodging and sustenance upon your own charges?’

‘Nothing more,’ said she. ‘If you are a man and a Christian, you will help me to what I need so much.’

‘A man I am,’ replied the formal Caledonian, ‘e’en sic as ye see me; and a Christian I may call myself, though unworthy, and though I have heard little pure doctrine since I came hither — a’ polluted with men’s devices — ahem! Weel, and if ye be an honest woman (here he peeped under her muffler), as an honest woman ye seem likely to be — though, let me tell you, they are a kind of cattle not so rife in the streets of this city as I would desire them; I was almost strangled with my own band by twa rampallians, wha wanted yestreen, nae farther gane, to harle me into a change-house — however, if ye be a decent honest woman (here he took another peep at features certainly bearing no beauty which could infer suspicion), as decent and honest ye seem to be, why, I will advise you to a decent house, where you will get douce, quiet entertainment, on reasonable terms, and the occasional benefit of my own counsel and direction — that is, from time to time, as my other avocations may permit.’

‘May I venture to accept of such an offer from a stranger?’ said Martha, with natural hesitation.

‘Troth, I see nothing to hinder you, mistress,’ replied the bony Scot; ‘ye can but see the place, and do after as ye think best. Besides, we are nae such strangers, neither; for I know your friend, and you, it’s like, know mine, whilk knowledge, on either hand, is a medium of communication between us, even as the middle of the string connecteth its twa ends or extremities. But I will enlarge on this farther as we pass along, gin ye list to bid your twa lazy loons of porters there lift up your little kist between them, whilk ae true Scotsman might carry under his arm. Let me tell you, mistress, ye will soon make a toom pock-end of it in Lon’on, if you hire twa knaves to do the work of ane.’

So saying, he led the way, followed by Mistress Martha Trapbois, whose singular destiny, though it had heaped her with wealth, had left her, for the moment, no wiser counsellor, or more distinguished protector, than honest Richie Moniplies, a discarded serving-man.

CHAPTER XXVII

This way lie safety and a sure retreat ;
Yonder lie danger, shame, and punishment.
Most welcome danger then. Nay, let me say,
Though spoke with swelling heart, welcome e'en shame;
And welcome punishment ; for, call me guilty,
I do but pay the tax that's due to justice ;
And call me guiltless, then that punishment
Is shame to those alone who do inflict it.

The Tribunal.

WE left Lord Glenvarloch, to whose fortunes our story chiefly attaches itself, gliding swiftly down the Thames. He was not, as the reader may have observed, very affable in his disposition, or apt to enter into conversation with those into whose company he was casually thrown. This was, indeed, an error in his conduct, arising less from pride, though of that feeling we do not pretend to exculpate him, than from a sort of bashful reluctance to mix in the conversation of those with whom he was not familiar. It is a fault only to be cured by experience and knowledge of the world, which soon teaches every sensible and acute person the important lesson that amusement, and, what is of more consequence, that information and increase of knowledge, are to be derived from the conversation of every individual whatsoever, with whom he is thrown into a natural train of communication. For ourselves, we can assure the reader — and perhaps, if we have ever been able to afford him amusement, it is owing in a great degree to this cause — that we never found ourselves in company with the stupidest of all possible companions in a post-chaise, or with the most arrant cumber-corner that ever occupied a place in the mail-coach, without finding that, in the course of our conversation with him, we had some ideas suggested to us, either grave or gay, or some information communicated in the course of our journey, which we should have regretted not to have learned, and which we should be sorry to have immediately forgotten. But Nigel was somewhat im-

mured within the Bastile of his rank, as some philosopher (Tom Paine, we think) has happily enough expressed that sort of shyness which men of dignified situations are apt to be beset with, rather from not exactly knowing how far, or with whom, they ought to be familiar, than from any real touch of aristocratic pride. Besides, the immediate pressure of our adventurer's own affairs was such as exclusively to engross his attention.

He sat, therefore, wrapt in his cloak, in the stern of the boat, with his mind entirely bent upon the probable issue of the interview with his sovereign, which it was his purpose to seek; for which abstraction of mind he may be fully justified, although, perhaps, by questioning the watermen who were transporting him down the river, he might have discovered matters of high concernment to him.

At any rate, Nigel remained silent till the wherry approached the town of Greenwich, when he commanded the men to put in for the nearest landing-place, as it was his purpose to go ashore there, and dismiss them from further attendance.

'That is not possible,' said the fellow with the green jacket, who, as we have already said, seemed to take on himself the charge of pilotage. 'We must go,' he continued, 'to Gravesend, where a Scottish vessel, which dropt down the river last tide for the very purpose, lies with her anchor a-peak, waiting to carry you to your own dear Northern country. Your hammock is slung, and all is ready for you, and you talk of going ashore at Greenwich, as seriously as if such a thing were possible!'

'I see no impossibility,' said Nigel, 'in your landing me where I desire to be landed; but very little possibility of your carrying me anywhere I am not desirous of going.'

'Why, whether do you manage the wherry, or we, master?' asked Green-Jacket, in a tone betwixt jest and earnest; 'I take it she will go the way we row her.'

'Ay,' retorted Nigel, 'but I take it you will row her on the course I direct you, otherwise your chance of payment is but a poor one.'

'Suppose we are content to risk that,' said the undaunted waterman, 'I wish to know how you, who talk so big — I mean no offence, master, but you *do* talk big — would help yourself in such a case?'

'Simply thus,' answered Lord Glenvarloch. 'You saw me, an hour since, bring down to the boat a trunk that neither of

you could lift. If we are to contest the destination of our voyage, the same strength which tossed that chest into the wherry will suffice to fling you out of it ; wherefore, before we begin the scuffle, I pray you to remember that, whither I would go, there I will oblige you to carry me.'

'Gramercy for your kindness,' said Green-Jacket ; 'and now mark me in return. My comrade and I are two men, and you, were you as stout as George-a-Green, can pass but for one ; and two, you will allow, are more than a match for one. You mistake your reckoning, my friend.'

'It is you who mistake,' answered Nigel, who began to grow warm. 'It is I who am three to two, sirrah : I carry two men's lives at my girdle.' So saying, he opened his cloak and showed the two pistols which he had disposed at his girdle.

Green-Jacket was unmoved at the display. 'I have got,' said he, 'a pair of barkers that will match yours,' and he showed that he also was armed with pistols ; 'so you may begin as soon as you list.'

'Then,' said Lord Glenvarloch, drawing forth and cocking a pistol, 'the sooner the better. Take notice, I hold you as a ruffian, who have declared you will put force on my person ; and that I will shoot you through the head if you do not instantly put me ashore at Greenwich.'

The other waterman, alarmed at Nigel's gesture, lay upon his oar ; but Green-Jacket replied coolly, 'Look you, master, I should not care a tester to venture a life with you on this matter ; but the truth is, I am employed to do you good, and not to do you harm.'

'By whom are you employed ?' said the Lord Glenvarloch ; 'or who dare concern themselves in me, or my affairs, without my authority ?'

'As to that,' answered the waterman, in the same tone of indifference, 'I shall not show my commission. For myself, I care not, as I said, whether you land at Greenwich to get yourself hanged, or go down to get aboard the "Royal Thistle," to make your escape to your own country ; you will be equally out of my reach either way. But it is fair to put the choice before you.'

'My choice is made,' said Nigel. 'I have told you thrice already it is my pleasure to be landed at Greenwich.'

'Write it on a piece of paper,' said the waterman, 'that such is your positive will ; I must have something to show to my

employers that the transgression of their orders lies with yourself, not with me.'

'I choose to hold this trinket in my hand for the present,' said Nigel, showing his pistol, 'and will write you the acquittance when I go ashore.'

'I would not go ashore with you for a hundred pieces,' said the waterman. 'Ill-luck has ever attended you, except in small gaming; do me fair justice, and give me the testimony I desire. If you are afraid of foul play while you write it, you may hold my pistols, if you will.' He offered the weapons to Nigel accordingly, who, while they were under his control, and all possibility of his being taken at advantage was excluded, no longer hesitated to give the waterman an acknowledgment, in the following terms:—

'Jack in the Green, with his mate, belonging to the wherry called the "Jolly Raven," have done their duty faithfully by me, landing me at Greenwich by my express command; and being themselves willing and desirous to carry me on board the "Royal Thistle," presently lying at Gravesend.' Having finished this acknowledgment, which he signed with the letters 'N. O. G.' as indicating his name and title, he again requested to know of the waterman to whom he delivered it the name of his employers.

'Sir,' replied Jack in the Green, 'I have respected your secret, do not you seek to pry into mine. It would do you no good to know for whom I am taking this present trouble; and, to be brief, you shall not know it; and, if you will fight in the quarrel, as you said even now, the sooner we begin the better. Only this you may be cock-sure of, that we designed you no harm, and that, if you fall into any, it will be of your own wilful seeking.' As he spoke, they approached the landing-place, where Nigel instantly jumped ashore. The waterman placed his small mail-trunk on the stairs, observing, that there were plenty of spare hands about, to carry it where he would.

'We part friends, I hope, my lads,' said the young nobleman, offering at the same time a piece of money more than double the usual fare to the boatmen.

'We part as we met,' answered Green-Jacket; 'and, for your money, I am paid sufficiently with this bit of paper. Only, if you owe me any love for the cast I have given you, I pray you not to dive so deep into the pockets of the next apprentice that you find fool enough to play the cavalier. And you, you greedy swine,' said he to his companion, who still had a longing eye

fixed on the money which Nigel continued to offer, 'push off, or, if I take a stretcher in hand, I'll break the knave's pate of thee.' The fellow pushed off, as he was commanded, but still could not help muttering, 'This was entirely out of watermen's rules.'

Glenvarloch, though without the devotion of the 'injured Thales' of the moralist to the memory of that great princess, had now attained

The hallow'd soil which gave Eliza birth,

whose halls were now less respectably occupied by her successor. It was not, as has been well shown by a late author, that James was void either of parts or of good intentions; and his predecessor was at least as arbitrary in effect as he was in theory. But, while Elizabeth possessed a sternness of masculine sense and determination which rendered even her weaknesses, some of which were in themselves sufficiently ridiculous, in a certain degree respectable, James, on the other hand, was so utterly devoid of 'firm resolve,' so well called by the Scottish bard,

The stalk of carle-hemp in man,

that even his virtues and his good meaning became laughable, from the whimsical uncertainty of his conduct; so that the wisest things he ever said, and the best actions he ever did, were often touched with a strain of the ludicrous and fidgety character of the man. Accordingly, though at different periods of his reign he contrived to acquire with his people a certain degree of temporary popularity, it never long outlived the occasion which produced it; so true it is, that the mass of mankind will respect a monarch stained with actual guilt more than one whose foibles render him only ridiculous.

To return from this digression, Lord Glenvarloch soon received, as Green-Jacket had assured him, the offer of an idle bargeman to transport his baggage where he listed; but that *where* was a question of momentary doubt. At length, recollecting the necessity that his hair and beard should be properly arranged before he attempted to enter the royal presence, and desirous, at the same time, of obtaining some information of the motions of the sovereign and of the court, he desired to be guided to the next barber's shop, which we have already mentioned as the place where news of every kind circled and centred. He was speedily shown the way to such an emporium of intelligence, and soon found he was likely to hear all he

desired to know, and much more, while his head was subjected to the art of a nimble tonsor, the glibness of whose tongue kept pace with the nimbleness of his fingers, while he ran on, without stint or stop, in the following excursive manner :—

‘The court here, master?—yes, master—much to the advantage of trade—good custom stirring. His Majesty loves Greenwich—hunts every morning in the Park—all decent persons admitted that have the entries of the palace—no rabble—frightened the King’s horse with their hallooing, the uncombed slaves. Yes, sir, the beard more peaked? Yes, master, so it is worn. I know the last cut—dress several of the courtiers—one valet of the chamber, two pages of the body, the clerk of the kitchen, three running footmen, two dog-boys, and an honourable Scottish knight, Sir Munko Malgrowler.’

‘Malagrowther, I suppose?’ said Nigel, thrusting in his conjectural emendation, with infinite difficulty, betwixt two clauses in the barber’s text.

‘Yes, sir—Malcrowder, sir, as you say, sir—hard names the Scots have, sir, for an English mouth. Sir Munko is a handsome person, sir—perhaps you know him?—bating the loss of his fingers, and the lameness of his leg, and the length of his chin. Sir, it takes me one minute twelve seconds more time to trim that chin of his than any chin that I know in the town of Greenwich, sir. But he is a very comely gentleman for all that; and a pleasant—a very pleasant gentleman, sir; and a good-humoured, saving that he is so deaf he can never hear good of any one, and so wise, that he can never believe it; but he is a very good-natured gentleman for all that, except when one speaks too low, or when a hair turns awry. Did I graze you, sir? We shall put it to rights in a moment, with one drop of styptic—my styptic, or rather my wife’s, sir. She makes the water herself. One drop of the styptic, sir, and a bit of black taffeta patch, just big enough to be the saddle to a flea, sir. Yes, sir, rather improves than otherwise. The Prince had a patch the other day, and so had the Duke; and, if you will believe me, there are seventeen yards three-quarters of black taffeta already cut into patches for the courtiers.’

‘But Sir Mungo Malagrowther?’ again interjected Nigel, with difficulty.

‘Ay, ay, sir—Sir Munko, as you say; a pleasant, good-humoured gentleman as ever——To be spoken with, did you say? Oh, ay, easily to be spoken withal, that is, as easily as his infirmity will permit. He will presently, unless some one hath

asked him forth to breakfast, he taking his bone of broiled beef at my neighbour Ned Kilderkin's yonder, removed from over the way. Ned keeps an eating-house, sir, famous for pork-griskins; but Sir Munko cannot abide pork, no more than the King's most sacred Majesty,¹ nor my Lord Duke of Lennox, nor Lord Dalgarno — nay, I am sure, sir, if I touched you this time, it was your fault, not mine. But a single drop of the styptic, another little patch that would make a doublet for a flea, just under the left mustachio; it will become you when you smile, sir, as well as a dimple; and if you would salute your fair mistress — but I beg pardon, you are a grave gentleman, very grave to be so young. Hope I have given no offence; it is my duty to entertain customers — my duty, sir, and my pleasure. Sir Munko Malcrowther? Yes, sir, I daresay he is at this moment in Ned's eating-house, for few folks ask him out, now Lord Huntinglen is gone to London. You will get touched again. Yes, sir, there you shall find him with his can of single ale, stirred with a sprig of rosemary, for he never drinks strong potations, sir, unless to oblige Lord Huntinglen — take heed, sir — or any other person who asks him forth to breakfast; but single beer he always drinks at Ned's, with his broiled bone of beef or mutton — or, it may be, lamb at the season; but not pork, though Ned is famous for his griskins. But the Scots never eat pork — strange that! some folks think they are a sort of Jews. There is a resemblance, sir. Do you not think so? Then they call our most gracious sovereign the second Solomon, and Solomon, you know, was king of the Jews; so the thing bears a face, you see. I believe, sir, you will find yourself trimmed now to your content. I will be judged by the fair mistress of your affections. Grave pardon — no offence, I trust. Pray, consult the glass. One touch of the crisping-tongs, to reduce this straggler. Thank your munificence, sir; hope your custom while you stay in Greenwich. Would you have a tune on that ghittern, to put your temper in concord for the day? Twang; twang — twang, twang, dillo. Something out of tune, sir — too many hands to touch it — we cannot keep these things like artists. Let me help you with your cloak, sir — yes, sir. You would not play yourself, sir, would you? Way to Sir Munko's eating-house? Yes, sir; but it is Ned's eating-house, not Sir Munko's. The knight, to be sure, eats there, and that makes it his eating-house in some sense, sir — ha, ha! Yonder it is, removed from over the way, new white-washed posts, and

¹ See Scots' Dislike to Pork. Note 30.

red lattice — fat man in his doublet at the door — Ned himself, sir — worth a thousand pounds, they say ; better singeing pigs' faces than trimming courtiers, but ours is the less mechanical vocation. Farewell, sir ; hope your custom.' So saying, he at length permitted Nigel to depart, whose ears, so long tormented with his continued babble, tingled when it had ceased, as if a bell had been rung close to them for the same space of time.

Upon his arrival at the eating-house, where he proposed to meet with Sir Mungo Malagrowth, from whom, in despair of better advice, he trusted to receive some information as to the best mode of introducing himself into the royal presence, Lord Glenvarloch found, in the host with whom he communed, the consequential taciturnity of an Englishman well to pass in the world. Ned Kilderkin spoke as a banker writes, only touching the needful. Being asked if Sir Mungo Malagrowth was there ? he replied, 'No.' Being interrogated whether he was expected ? he said, 'Yes.' And being required to say when he was expected, he answered, 'Presently.' As Lord Glenvarloch next inquired whether he himself could have any breakfast ? the landlord wasted not even a syllable in reply, but, ushering him into a neat room where there were several tables, he placed one of them before an arm-chair, and beckoning Lord Glenvarloch to take possession, he set before him, in a very few minutes, a substantial repast of roast-beef, together with a foaming tankard, to which refreshment the keen air of the river disposed him, notwithstanding his mental embarrassments, to do much honour.

While Nigel was thus engaged in discussing his commons, but raising his head at the same time whenever he heard the door of the apartment open, eagerly desiring the arrival of Sir Mungo Malagrowth (an event which had seldom been expected by any one with so much anxious interest), a personage, as it seemed, of at least equal importance with the knight, entered into the apartment, and began to hold earnest colloquy with the publican, who thought proper to carry on the conference on his side unbonneted. This important gentleman's occupation might be guessed from his dress. A milk-white jerkin, and hose of white kersey ; a white apron twisted around his body in the manner of a sash, in which, instead of a warlike dagger, was stuck a long-bladed knife, hilted with buck's-horn ; a white nightcap on his head, under which his hair was neatly tucked, sufficiently pourtrayed him as one of those priests of Comus whom the vulgar call cooks ; and the air with which he rated

the publican for having neglected to send some provisions to the palace showed that he ministered to royalty itself.

'This will never answer,' he said, 'Master Kilderkin; the King twice asked for sweetbreads and fricasseed coxcombs, which are a favourite dish of his most sacred Majesty, and they were not to be had, because Master Kilderkin had not supplied them to the clerk of the kitchen, as by bargain bound.' Here Kilderkin made some apology, brief, according to his own nature, and muttered in a lowly tone after the fashion of all who find themselves in a scrape. His superior replied, in a lofty strain of voice, 'Do not tell me of the carrier and his wain, and of the hen-coops coming from Norfolk with the poultry; a loyal man would have sent an express — he would have gone upon his stumps, like Widdrington. What if the King had lost his appetite, Master Kilderkin? What if his most sacred Majesty had lost his dinner? O Master Kilderkin, if you had but the just sense of the dignity of our profession, which is told of by the witty African slave, for so the King's most excellent Majesty designates him, Publius Terentius, *Tanquam in speculo, in patinas inspicere jubeo.*'

'You are learned, Master Linklater,' replied the English publican, compelling, as it were with difficulty, his mouth to utter three or four words consecutively.

'A poor smatterer,' said Mr. Linklater; 'but it would be a shame to us, who are his most excellent Majesty's countrymen, not in some sort to have cherished those arts wherewith he is so deeply embued. *Regis ad exemplar*, Master Kilderkin, *totus componitur orbis*; which is as much as to say, as the King quotes the cook learns. In brief, Master Kilderkin, having had the luck to be bred where humanities may be had at the matter of an English five groats by the quarter, I, like others, have acquired — ahem — hem!' Here, the speaker's eye having fallen upon Lord Glenvarloch, he suddenly stopped in his learned harangue, with such symptoms of embarrassment as induced Ned Kilderkin to stretch his taciturnity so far as not only to ask him what he ailed, but whether he would take anything.

'Ail nothing,' replied the learned rival of the philosophical Syrus — 'nothing — and yet I do feel a little giddy. I could taste a glass of your dame's *aqua mirabilis.*'

'I will fetch it,' said Ned, giving a nod; and his back was no sooner turned than the cook walked near the table where Lord Glenvarloch was seated, and regarding him with a look of

significance, where more was meant than met the ear, said — ‘You are a stranger in Greenwich, sir. I advise you to take the opportunity to step into the Park; the western wicket was ajar when I came hither; I think it will be locked presently, so you had better make the best of your way — that is, if you have any curiosity. The venison are coming into season just now, sir, and there is a pleasure in looking at a hart of grease. I always think when they are bounding so blithely past, what a pleasure it would be to broach their plump haunches on a spit, and to embattle their breasts in a noble fortification of puff-paste, with plenty of black pepper.’

He said no more, as Kilderkin re-entered with the cordial, but edged off from Nigel without waiting any reply, only repeating the same look of intelligence with which he had accosted him.

Nothing makes men’s wits so alert as personal danger. Nigel took the first opportunity which his host’s attention to the yeoman of the royal kitchen permitted to discharge his reckoning, and readily obtained a direction to the wicket in question. He found it upon the latch, as he had been taught to expect; and perceived that it admitted him to a narrow foot-path, which traversed a close and tangled thicket, designed for the cover of the does and the young fawns. Here he conjectured it would be proper to wait; nor had he been stationary above five minutes, when the cook, scalded as much with heat of motion as ever he had been at his huge fireplace, arrived almost breathless, and with his pass-key hastily locked the wicket behind him.

Ere Lord Glenvarloch had time to speculate upon this action, the man approached with anxiety, and said — ‘Good lord, my Lord Glenvarloch, why will you endanger yourself thus?’

‘You know me then, my friend?’ said Nigel.

‘Not much of that, my lord; but I know your honour’s noble house well. My name is Laurie Linklater, my lord.’

‘Linklater!’ repeated Nigel. ‘I should recollect —’

‘Under your lordship’s favour,’ he continued, ‘I was ’prentice, my lord, to old Mungo Moniplies, the flesher at the wanton West Port of Edinburgh, which I wish I saw again before I died. And your honour’s noble father having taken Richie Moniplies into his house to wait on your lordship, there was a sort of connexion, your lordship sees.’

‘Ah!’ said Lord Glenvarloch, ‘I had almost forgot your

name, but not your kind purpose. You tried to put Richie in the way of presenting a supplication to his Majesty?’

‘Most true, my lord,’ replied the king’s cook. ‘I had like to have come by mischief in the job; for Richie, who was always wilful, “wadna be guided by me,” as the sang says. But nobody amongst these brave English cooks can kittle up his Majesty’s most sacred palate with our own gusty Scottish dishes. So I e’en betook myself to my craft, and concocted a mess of friar’s chicken for the soup, and a savoury *hachis*, that made the whole cabal coup the crans; and, instead of disgrace, I came by preferment. I am one of the clerks of the kitchen now, make me thankful! with a finger in the purveyor’s office, and may get my whole hand in by and by.’

‘I am truly glad,’ said Nigel, ‘to hear that you have not suffered on my account — still more so at your good fortune.’

‘You bear a kind heart, my lord,’ said Linklater, ‘and do not forget poor people; and, troth, I see not why they should be forgotten, since the king’s errand may sometimes fall in the cadger’s gate. I have followed your lordship in the street, just to look at such a stately shoot of the old oak-tree; and my heart jumped into my throat when I saw you sitting openly in the eating-house yonder, and knew there was such danger to your person.’

‘What! there are warrants against me, then?’ said Nigel.

‘It is even true, my lord; and there are those are willing to blacken you as much as they can. God forgive them, that would sacrifice an honourable house for their own base ends!’

‘Amen,’ said Nigel.

‘For, say your lordship may have been a little wild, like other young gentlemen —’

‘We have little time to talk of it, my friend,’ said Nigel. ‘The point in question is, how am I to get speech of the King?’

‘The King, my lord!’ said Linklater, in astonishment; ‘why, will not that be rushing wilfully into danger? — scalding yourself, as I may say, with your own ladle?’

‘My good friend,’ answered Nigel, ‘my experience of the court, and my knowledge of the circumstances in which I stand, tell me that the manliest and most direct road is, in my case, the surest and the safest. The King has both a head to apprehend what is just and a heart to do what is kind.’

‘It is e’en true, my lord, and so we, his old servants, know,’ added Linklater; ‘but, woe’s me, if you knew how many folks

make it their daily and nightly purpose to set his head against his heart, and his heart against his head : to make him do hard things because they are called just, and unjust things because they are represented as kind. Woe's me ! it is with his sacred Majesty and the favourites who work upon him even according to the homely proverb that men taunt my calling with, "God sends good meat, but the devil sends cooks."

'It signifies not talking of it, my good friend,' said Nigel, 'I must take my risk ; my honour peremptorily demands it. They may maim me or beggar me, but they shall not say I fled from my accusers. My peers shall hear my vindication.'

'Your peers !' exclaimed the cook. 'Alack-a-day, my lord, we are not in Scotland, where the nobles can bang it out bravely, were it even with the King himself, now and then. This mess must be cooked in the Star Chamber, and that is an oven seven times heated, my lord ; and yet, if you are determined to see the King, I will not say but you may find some favour, for he likes well anything that is appealed directly to his own wisdom, and sometimes, in the like cases, I have known him stick by his own opinion, which is always a fair one. Only mind, if you will forgive me, my lord — mind to spice high with Latin ; a curn or two of Greek would not be amiss ; and, if you can bring in anything about the judgment of Solomon, in the original Hebrew, and season with a merry jest or so, the dish will be the more palatable. Truly, I think that, besides my skill in art, I owe much to the stripes of the rector of the High School, who imprinted on my mind that cooking scene in the *Heautontimorumenos*.'

'Leaving that aside, my friend,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'can you inform me which way I shall most readily get to the sight and speech of the King ?'

'To the sight of him readily enough,' said Linklater ; 'he is galloping about these alleys, to see them strike the hart, to get him an appetite for a nooning — and that reminds me, I should be in the kitchen. To the speech of the King you will not come so easily, unless you could either meet him alone, which rarely chances, or wait for him among the crowd that go to see him alight. And now, farewell, my lord, and God speed ! If I could do more for you, I would offer it.'

'You have done enough, perhaps, to endanger yourself,' said Lord Glenvarloch. 'I pray you to be gone, and leave me to my fate.'

The honest cook lingered, but a nearer burst of the horns

apprised him that there was no time to lose ; and, acquainting Nigel that he would leave the postern door on the latch to secure his retreat in that direction, he bade God bless him, and farewell.

In the kindness of this humble countryman, flowing partly from national partiality, partly from a sense of long-remembered benefits, which had been scarce thought on by those who had bestowed them, Lord Glenvarloch thought he saw the last touch of sympathy which he was to receive in this cold and courtly region, and felt that he must now be sufficient to himself or be utterly lost.

He traversed more than one alley, guided by the sounds of the chase, and met several of the inferior attendants upon the King's sport, who regarded him only as one of the spectators who were sometimes permitted to enter the Park by the concurrence of the officers about the court. Still there was no appearance of James or any of his principal courtiers, and Nigel began to think whether, at the risk of incurring disgrace similar to that which had attended the rash exploit of Richie Moniplies, he should not repair to the palace gate, in order to address the King on his return, when Fortune presented him the opportunity of doing so, in her own way.

He was in one of those long walks by which the Park was traversed, when he heard, first a distant rustling, then the rapid approach of hoofs shaking the firm earth on which he stood, then a distant halloo, warned by which he stood up by the side of the avenue, leaving free room for the passage of the chase. The stag, reeling, covered with foam, and blackened with sweat, his nostrils expanded as he gasped for breath, made a shift to come up as far as where Nigel stood, and, without turning to bay, was there pulled down by two tall greyhounds of the breed still used by the hardy deer-stalkers of the Scottish Highlands, but which has been long unknown in England. One dog struck at the buck's throat, another dashed his sharp nose and fangs, I might almost say, into the animal's bowels. It would have been natural for Lord Glenvarloch, himself persecuted as if by hunters, to have thought upon the occasion like the melancholy Jacques ; but habit is a strange matter, and I fear that his feelings on the occasion were rather those of the practised huntsman than of the moralist. He had no time, however, to indulge them, for mark what befell.

A single horseman followed the chase, upon a steed so thoroughly subjected to the rein that it obeyed the touch of

the bridle as if it had been a mechanical impulse operating on the nicest piece of machinery ; so that, seated deep in his demi-pique saddle, and so trussed up there as to make falling almost impossible, the rider, without either fear or hesitation, might increase or diminish the speed at which he rode, which, even on the most animating occasions of the chase, seldom exceeded three-fourths of a gallop, the horse keeping his haunches under him, and never stretching forward beyond the managed pace of the academy. The security with which he chose to prosecute even this favourite, and, in ordinary case, somewhat dangerous, amusement, as well as the rest of his equipage, marked King James. No attendant was within sight ; indeed, it was often a nice strain of flattery to permit the sovereign to suppose he had outridden and distanced all the rest of the chase.

‘Weel dune, Bash — weel dune, Battie !’ he exclaimed, as he came up. ‘By the honour of a king, ye are a credit to the Braes of Balwhither ! Haud my horse, man,’ he called out to Nigel, without stopping to see to whom he had addressed himself — ‘haud my naig, and help me down out o’ the saddle ; deil ding your saul, sirrah, canna ye mak haste before these lazy smaiks come up ? Haud the rein easy — dinna let him swerve — now, haud the stirrup ; that will do, man, and now we are on *terra firma*.’ So saying, without casting an eye on his assistant, gentle King Jamie, unsheathing the short, sharp hanger (*couteau de chasse*), which was the only thing approaching to a sword that he could willingly endure the sight of, drew the blade with great satisfaction across the throat of the buck, and put an end at once to its struggles and its agonies.

Lord Glenvarloch, who knew well the silvan duty which the occasion demanded, hung the bridle of the King’s palfrey on the branch of a tree, and, kneeling dutéously down, turned the slaughtered deer upon its back, and kept the *quarrée* in that position, while the King, too intent upon his sport to observe anything else, drew his *couteau* down the breast of the animal *secundum artem* ; and, having made a cross cut, so as to ascertain the depth of the fat upon the chest, exclaimed, in a sort of rapture, ‘Three inches of white fat on the brisket ! — prime — prime — as I am a crowned sinner ; and deil ane o’ the lazy loons in but mysell ! Seven — aught — aught tines on the antlers. By G — d, a hart of aught tines, and the first of the season ! Bash and Battie, blessings on the heart’s-root of ye ! Buss me, my bairns — buss me.’ The dogs accordingly fawned upon him, licked him with bloody jaws, and soon put him in

such a state that it might have seemed treason had been doing its fell work upon his anointed body. 'Bide down, with a mischief to ye — bide down, with a wanion,' cried the King, almost overturned by the obstreperous caresses of the large stag-hounds. 'But ye are just like ither folks, gie ye an inch and ye take an ell. And wha may ye be, friend?' he said, now finding leisure to take a nearer view of Nigel, and observing what in his first emotion of silvan delight had escaped him. 'Ye are nane of our train, man. In the name of God, what the devil are ye?'

'An unfortunate man, sire,' replied Nigel.

'I daresay that,' answered the King, snappishly, 'or I wad have seen naething of you. My lieges keep a' their happiness to themselves; but let bowls row wrang wi' them, and I am sure to hear of it.'

'And to whom else can we carry our complaints but to your Majesty, who is Heaven's vicegerent over us?' answered Nigel.

'Right, man, right — very weel spoken,' said the King; 'but you should leave Heaven's vicegerent some quiet on earth, too.'

'If your Majesty will look on me,' for hitherto the King had been so busy, first with the dogs, and then with the mystic operation of 'breaking,' in vulgar phrase, cutting up, the deer, that he had scarce given his assistant above a transient glance, 'you will see whom necessity makes bold to avail himself of an opportunity which may never again occur.'

King James looked; his blood left his cheek, though it continued stained with that of the animal which lay at his feet, he dropped the knife from his hand, cast behind him a faltering eye, as if he either meditated flight or looked out for assistance, and then exclaimed — 'Glenvarlochides! as sure as I was christened James Stewart. Here is a bonny spot of work, and me alone, and on foot too!' he added, bustling to get upon his horse.

'Forgive me that I interrupt you, my liege,' said Nigel, placing himself between the King and the steed; 'hear me but a moment!'

'I'll hear ye best on horseback,' said the King. 'I canna hear a word on foot, man — not a word; and it is not seemly to stand cheek-for-chowl confronting us that gate. Bide out of our gate, sir, we charge you on your allegiance. The deil's in them a', what can they be doing?'

'By the crown which you wear, my liege,' said Nigel, 'and for which my ancestors have worthily fought, I conjure you to be composed, and to hear me but a moment!'

That which he asked was entirely out of the monarch's power to grant. The timidity which he showed was not the plain downright cowardice which, like a natural impulse, compels a man to flight, and which can excite little but pity or contempt, but a much more ludicrous, as well as more mingled, sensation. The poor king was frightened at once and angry, desirous of securing his safety, and at the same time ashamed to compromise his dignity; so that, without attending to what Lord Glenvarloch endeavoured to explain, he kept making at his horse, and repeating, 'We are a free king, man—we are a free king; we will not be controlled by a subject. In the name of God, what keeps Steenie? And, praised be His name! they are coming. Hillo, ho—here, here—Steenie, Steenie!'

The Duke of Buckingham galloped up, followed by several courtiers and attendants of the royal chase, and commenced with his usual familiarity—'I see Fortune has graced our dear dad, as usual. But what's this?'

'What is it? It is treason for what I ken,' said the King; 'and a' your wyte, Steenie. Your dear dad and gossip might have been murdered, for what you care.'

'Murdered! Secure the villain!' exclaimed the duke. 'By Heaven, it is Olifaunt himself!' A dozen of the hunters dismounted at once, letting their horses run wild through the Park. Some seized roughly on Lord Glenvarloch, who thought it folly to offer resistance, while others busied themselves with the King. 'Are you wounded, my liege—are you wounded?'

'Not that I ken of,' said the King, in the paroxysm of his apprehension, which, by the way, might be pardoned in one of so timorous a temper, and who, in his time, had been exposed to so many strange attempts—'not that I ken of; but search him—search him. I am sure I saw firearms under his cloak. I am sure I smelled powder—I am dooms. sure of that.'

Lord Glenvarloch's cloak being stripped off, and his pistols discovered, a shout of wonder and of execration on the supposed criminal purpose arose from the crowd now thickening every moment. Not that celebrated pistol which, though resting on a bosom as gallant and as loyal as Nigel's, spread such causeless alarm among knights and dames at a late high solemnity—not that very pistol caused more temporary consternation than was so groundlessly excited by the arms which were taken

from Lord Glenvarloch's person ; and not Mhic-Allastar-More¹ himself could repel with greater scorn and indignation the insinuations that they were worn for any sinister purposes.

'Away with the wretch — the parricide — the bloody-minded villain !' was echoed on all hands ; and the King, who naturally enough set the same value on his own life at which it was, or seemed to be, rated by others, cried out, louder than all the rest, 'Ay — ay, away with him. I have had enough of him, and so has the country. But do him no bodily harm ; and, for God's sake, sirs, if ye are sure that ye have thoroughly disarmed him, put up your swords, dirks, and skenes, for you will certainly do each other a mischief.'

There was a speedy sheathing of weapons at the King's command ; for those who had hitherto been brandishing them in loyal bravado began thereby to call to mind the extreme dislike which his Majesty nourished against naked steel — a foible which seemed to be as constitutional as his timidity, and was usually ascribed to the brutal murder of Rizzio having been perpetrated in his unfortunate mother's presence before he yet saw the light.

At this moment, the Prince, who had been hunting in a different part of the then extensive Park, and had received some hasty and confused information of what was going forward, came rapidly up, with one or two noblemen in his train, and amongst others Lord Dalgarno. He sprung from his horse, and asked eagerly if his father were wounded.

'Not that I am sensible of, Baby Charles ; but a wee matter exhausted, with struggling single-handed with the assassin. Steenie, fill us a cup of wine — the leathern bottle is hanging at our pommel. Buss me, then, Baby Charles,' continued the monarch, after he had taken this cup of comfort.² 'O man, the Commonwealth and you have had a fair escape from the heavy and bloody loss of a dear father ; for we are *pater patriæ* as weel as *paterfamilias*. *Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modus tam cari capitis !* Woe is me, black cloth would have been dear in England, and dry een scarce !'

And, at the very idea of the general grief which must have attended his death, the good-natured monarch cried heartily himself.

'Is this possible ?' said Charles, sternly ; for his pride was hurt at his father's demeanour on the one hand, while, on the other, he felt the resentment of a son and a subject at the sup-

¹ See Note 31.

² See King James's Hunting-Bottle. Note 32.

posed attempt on the King's life. 'Let some one speak who has seen what happened. My Lord of Buckingham!'

'I cannot say, my lord,' replied the Duke, 'that I saw any actual violence offered to his Majesty, else I should have avenged him on the spot.'

'You would have done wrong, then, in your zeal, George,' answered the Prince; 'such offenders were better left to be dealt with by the laws. But was the villain not struggling with his Majesty?'

'I cannot term it so, my lord,' said the Duke, who, with many faults, would have disdained an untruth. He seemed to desire to detain his Majesty, who, on the contrary, appeared to wish to mount his horse; but they have found pistols on his person, contrary to the proclamation, and, as it proves to be Nigel Olifaunt, of whose ungoverned disposition your Royal Highness has seen some samples, we seem to be justified in apprehending the worst.'

'Nigel Olifaunt!' said the Prince; 'can that unhappy man so soon have engaged in a new trespass? Let me see those pistols.'

'Ye are not so unwise as to meddle with such snap-haunches, Baby Charles?' said James. 'Do not give him them, Steenie — I command you on your allegiance. They may go off of their own accord, whilk often befalls. You will do it, then? Saw ever man sic wilful bairns as we are cumbered with! Havaena we guardsmen and soldiers enow, but ye must unload the weapons yoursell — you, the heir of our body and dignities, and sae mony men around that are paid for venturing life in our cause?'

But, without regarding his father's exclamations, Prince Charles, with the obstinacy which characterised him in trifles as well as matters of consequence, persisted in unloading the pistols with his own hand of the double bullets with which each was charged. The hands of all around were held up in astonishment at the horror of the crime supposed to have been intended, and the escape which was presumed so narrow.

Nigel had not yet spoken a word; he now calmly desired to be heard.

'To what purpose?' answered the Prince, coldly. 'You knew yourself accused of a heavy offence, and, instead of rendering yourself up to justice, in terms of the proclamation, you are here found intruding yourself on his Majesty's presence, and armed with unlawful weapons.'

'May it please you, sir,' answered Nigel, 'I wore these unhappy weapons for my own defence; and not very many hours since they were necessary to protect the lives of others.'

'Doubtless, my lord,' answered the Prince, still calm and unmoved, 'your late mode of life, and the associates with whom you have lived, have made you familiar with scenes and weapons of violence. But it is not to me you are to plead your cause.'

'Hear me — hear me, noble prince!' said Nigel, eagerly. 'Hear me! You — even you yourself — may one day ask to be heard, and in vain.'

'How, sir,' said the Prince, haughtily — 'how am I to construe that, my lord?'

'If not on earth, sir,' replied the prisoner, 'yet to Heaven we must all pray for patient and favourable audience.'

'True, my lord,' said the Prince, bending his head with haughty acquiescence; 'nor would I now refuse such audience to you, could it avail you. But you shall suffer no wrong. We will ourselves look into your case.'

'Ay — ay,' answered the King, 'he hath made *appellatio ad Casarem*: we will interrogate Glenvarlochides ourselves, time and place fitting; and, in the meanwhile, have him and his weapons away, for I am weary of the sight of them.'

In consequence of directions hastily given, Nigel was accordingly removed from the presence, where, however, his words had not altogether fallen to the ground.¹ 'This is a most strange matter, George,' said the Prince to the favourite; 'this gentleman hath a good countenance, a happy presence, and much calm firmness in his look and speech. I cannot think he would attempt a crime so desperate and useless.'

'I profess neither love nor favour to the young man,' answered Buckingham, whose high-spirited ambition bore always an open character; 'but I cannot but agree with your Highness, that our dear gossip hath been something hasty in apprehending personal danger from him.'²

'By my saul, Steenie, ye are not blate, to say so!' said the King. 'Do I not ken the smell of pouthier, think ye? Who else nosed out the Fifth of November, save our royal selves? Cecil, and Suffolk, and all of them were at fault, like sae mony mongrel tikes, when I puzzled it out; and trow ye that I cannot smell pouthier? Why, 'sblood, man, Joannes Barclaius

¹ See Scene in Greenwich Park. Note 33.

² See King James's Timidity. Note 34.

thought my ingine was in some measure inspiration, and terms his history of the plot *Series patefacti divinitus parricidii*; and Spondanus, in like manner, saith of us, *Divinitus evasit.*'

'The land was happy in your Majesty's escape,' said the Duke of Buckingham, 'and not less in the quick wit which tracked that labyrinth of treason by so fine and almost invisible a clue.'

'Saul, man, Steenie, ye are right! There are few youths have sic true judgment as you respecting the wisdom of their elders; and as for this fause, traitorous smaik, I doubt he is a hawk of the same nest. Saw ye not something Papistical about him? Let them look that he bears not a crucifix or some sic Roman trinket about him.'

'It would ill become me to attempt the exculpation of this unhappy man,' said Lord Dalgarno, 'considering the height of his present attempt, which has made all true men's blood curdle in their veins. Yet I cannot avoid intimating, with all due submission to his Majesty's infallible judgment, in justice to one who showed himself formerly only my enemy, though he now displays himself in much blacker colours, that this Olifaunt always appeared to me more as a Puritan than as a Papist.'

'Ah, Dalgarno, art thou there, man?' said the King. 'And ye behoved to keep back, too, and leave us to our own natural strength and the care of Providence when we were in grips with the villain!'

'Providence, may it please your most gracious Majesty, would not fail to aid, in such a strait, the care of three weeping kingdoms,' said Lord Dalgarno.

'Surely, man — surely,' replied the King; 'but a sight of your father, with his long whinyard, would have been a blithe matter a short while syne; and in future we will aid the ends of Providence in our favour by keeping near us two stout beef-eaters of the guard. And so this Olifaunt is a Puritan? not the less like to be a Papist for all that, for extremities meet, as the scholiast proveth. There are, as I have proved in my book, Puritans of Papistical principles: it is just a new tout on an auld horn.'

Here the King was reminded by the Prince, who dreaded perhaps that he was going to recite the whole *Basilicon Doron*, that it would be best to move towards the palace, and consider what was to be done for satisfying the public mind, in whom the morning's adventure was likely to excite much speculation. As they entered the gate of the palace, a female bowed and

presented a paper, which the King received, and, with a sort of groan, thrust it into his side pocket. The Prince expressed some curiosity to know its contents. 'The valet in waiting will tell you them,' said the King, 'when I strip off my cassock. D'ye think, Baby, that I can read all that is thrust into my hands? See to me, man (he pointed to the pockets of his great trunk breeches, which were stuffed with papers). We are like an ass — that we should so speak! — stooping betwixt two burdens. Ay — ay, *Asinus fortis accumbens inter terminos*, as the Vulgate hath it. Ay, ay, *Vidi terram quod esset optima, et supposui humerum ad portandum, et factus sum tributis serviens* — I saw this land of England, and became an overburdened king thereof.'

'You are indeed well loaded, my dear dad and gossip,' said the Duke of Buckingham, receiving the papers which King James emptied out of his pockets.

'Ay — ay,' continued the monarch; 'take them to you *per aversionem*, bairns — the one pouch stuffed with petitions, t' other with pasquinadoes; a fine time we have on 't. On my conscience, I believe the tale of Cadmus was hieroglyphical, and that the dragon's teeth whilk he sowed were the letters he invented. Ye are laughing, Baby Charles? Mind what I say. When I came here first frae our ain country, where the men are as rude as the weather, by my conscience, England was a bieldy bit: one would have thought the King had little to do but to walk by quiet waters — *per aquam refectionis*. But I kenna how or why, the place is sair changed — read that libel upon us and on our regimen. The dragon's teeth are sown, Baby Charles; I pray God they bearna their armed harvest in your day, if I suld not live to see it. God forbid I should, for there will be an awful day's kemping at the shearing of them.'

'I shall know how to stifle the crop in the blade — ha, George?' said the Prince, turning to the favourite with a look expressive of some contempt for his father's apprehensions, and full of confidence in the superior firmness and decision of his own counsels.

While this discourse was passing, Nigel, in charge of a pursuivant-at-arms, was pushed and dragged through the small town, all the inhabitants of which, having been alarmed by the report of an attack on the King's life, now pressed forward to see the supposed traitor. Amid the confusion of the moment, he could descry the face of the victualler, arrested into a stare of stolid wonder, and that of the barber grinning betwixt horror

and eager curiosity. He thought that he also had a glimpse of his waterman in the green jacket.

He had no time for remarks, being placed in a boat with the pursuivant and two yeomen of the guard, and rowed up the river as fast as the arms of six stout watermen could pull against the tide. They passed the groves of masts which even then astonished the stranger with the extended commerce of London, and now approached those low and blackened walls of curtain and bastion which exhibit here and there a piece of ordnance, and here and there a solitary sentinel under arms, but have otherwise so little of the military terrors of a citadel. A projecting low-browed arch, which had loured over many an innocent and many a guilty head, in similar circumstances, now spread its dark frowns over that of Nigel.¹ The boat was put close up to the broad steps against which the tide was lapping its lazy wave. The warder on duty looked from the wicket, and spoke to the pursuivant in whispers. In a few minutes the lieutenant of the Tower appeared, received, and granted an acknowledgment for the body of Nigel Lord Glenvarloch.

¹ See Traitor's Gate. Note 35.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Ye towers of Julius ! London's lasting shame ;
With many a foul and midnight murder fed !

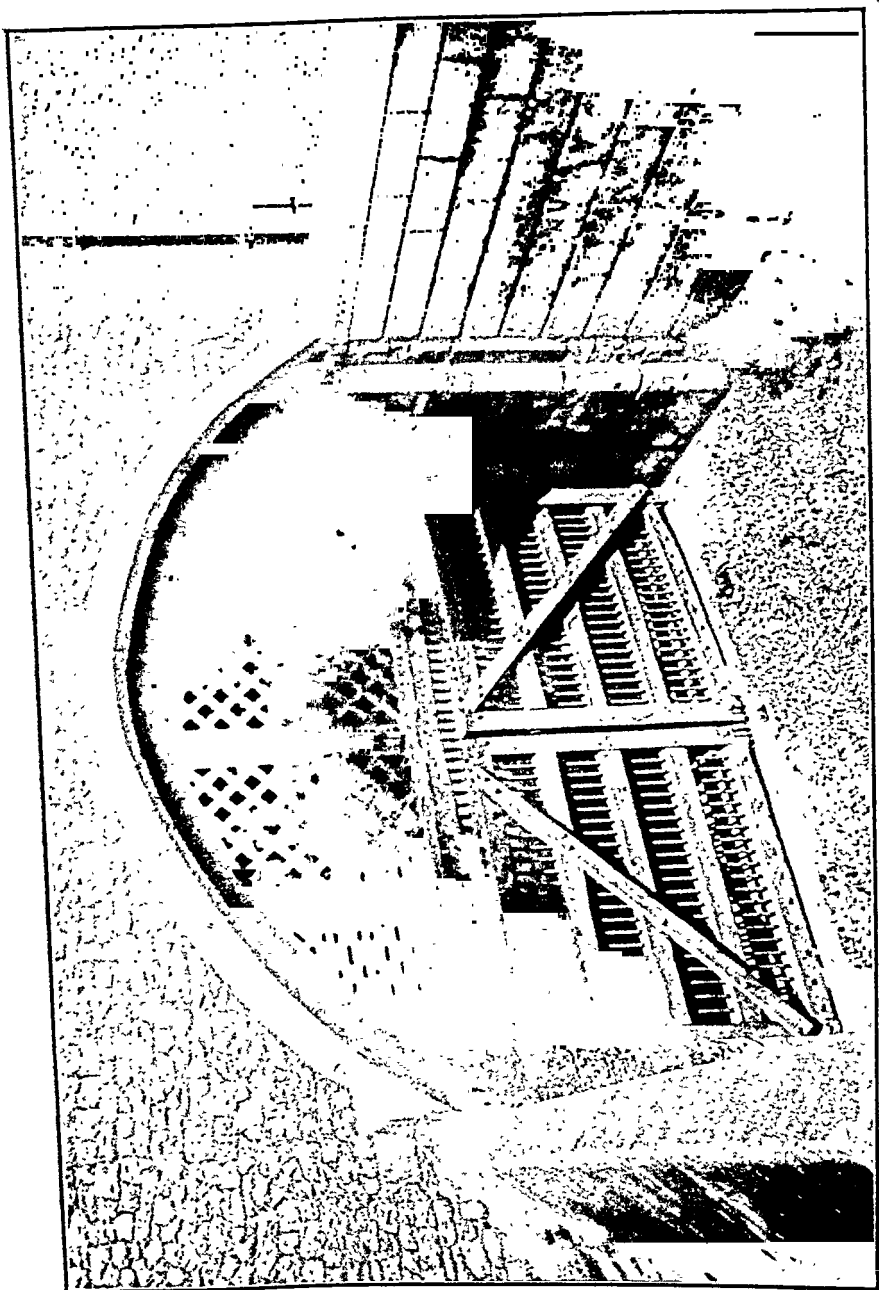
GRAY.

SUCH is the exclamation of Gray. Bandello, long before him, has said something like it ; and the same sentiment must, in some shape or other, have frequently occurred to those who, remembering the fate of other captives in that memorable state prison, may have had but too much reason to anticipate their own. The dark and low arch, which seemed, like the entrance to Dante's Hell, to forbid hope of regress ; the muttered sounds of the warders, and petty formalities observed in opening and shutting the grated wicket ; the cold and constrained salutation of the lieutenant of the fortress, who showed his prisoner that distant and measured respect which authority pays as a tax to decorum — all struck upon Nigel's heart, impressing on him the cruel consciousness of captivity.

'I am a prisoner,' he said, the words escaping from him almost unawares — 'I am a prisoner, and in the Tower !'

The lieutenant bowed. 'And it is my duty,' he said, 'to show your lordship your chamber, where I am compelled to say, my orders are to place you under some restraint. I will make it as easy as my duty permits.'

Nigel only bowed in return to this compliment, and followed the lieutenant to the ancient buildings on the western side of the parade, and adjoining to the chapel, used in those days as a state prison, but in ours as the mess-room of the officers of the guard upon duty at the fortress. The double doors were unlocked ; the prisoner ascended a few steps, followed by the lieutenant and a warder of the higher class. They entered a large, but irregular, low-roofed, and dark apartment, exhibiting a very scanty proportion of furniture. The warder had orders to light a fire and attend to Lord Glenvarloch's commands in all things consistent with his duty ; and the lieutenant, having



TRAITOR'S GATE, TOWER OF LONDON.



made his reverence with the customary compliment that, 'He trusted his lordship would not long remain under his guardianship,' took his leave.

Nigel would have asked some questions of the warder, who remained to put the apartment into order, but the man had caught the spirit of his office. He seemed not to hear some of the prisoner's questions, though of the most ordinary kind, did not reply to others, and when he did speak, it was in a short and sullen tone, which, though not positively disrespectful, was such as at least to encourage no farther communication.

Nigel left him, therefore, to do his work in silence, and proceeded to amuse himself with the melancholy task of deciphering the names, mottoes, verses, and hieroglyphics with which his predecessors in captivity had covered the walls of their prison-house. There he saw the names of many a forgotten sufferer, mingled with others which will continue in remembrance until English history shall perish. There were the pious effusions of the devout Catholic, poured forth on the eve of his sealing his profession at Tyburn, mingled with those of the firm Protestant, about to feed the fires of Smithfield. There the slender hand of the unfortunate Jane Grey, whose fate was to draw tears from future generations, might be contrasted with the bolder touch which impressed deep on the walls the bear and ragged-staff, the proud emblem of the proud Dudleys. It was like the roll of the prophet, a record of lamentation and mourning, and yet not unmingled with brief interjections of resignation, and sentences expressive of the firmest resolution.¹

In the sad task of examining the miseries of his predecessors in captivity, Lord Glenvarloch was interrupted by the sudden opening of the door of his prison-room. It was the warder, who came to inform him that, by order of the lieutenant of the Tower, his lordship was to have the society and attendance of a fellow-prisoner in his place of confinement. Nigel replied hastily, that he wished no attendance, and would rather be left alone; but the warder gave him to understand, with a kind of grumbling civility, that the lieutenant was the best judge how his prisoners should be accommodated, and that he would have no trouble with the boy, who was such a slip of a thing as was scarce worth turning a key upon. 'There, Giles,' he said, 'bring the child in.'

Another warder put the 'lad before him' into the room, and, both withdrawing, bolt crashed and chain clanged as they

¹ See Memorials of Illustrious Criminals. Note 36.

replaced these ponderous obstacles to freedom. The boy was clad in a grey suit of the finest cloth, laid down with silver lace, with a buff-coloured cloak of the same pattern. His cap, which was a montero of black velvet, was pulled over his brows, and, with the profusion of his long ringlets, almost concealed his face. He stood on the very spot where the warder had quitted his collar, about two steps from the door of the apartment, his eyes fixed on the ground, and every joint trembling with confusion and terror. Nigel could well have dispensed with his society, but it was not in his nature to behold distress, whether of body or mind, without endeavouring to relieve it.

‘Cheer up,’ he said, ‘my pretty lad. We are to be companions, it seems, for a little time—at least I trust your confinement will be short, since you are too young to have done aught to deserve long restraint. Come—come, do not be discouraged. Your hand is cold and trembles, the air is warm too—but it may be the damp of this darksome room. Place you by the fire. What! weeping-ripe, my little man? I pray you, do not be a child. You have no beard yet, to be dishonoured by your tears, but yet you should not cry like a girl. Think you are only shut up for playing truant, and you can pass a day without weeping, surely.’

The boy suffered himself to be led and seated by the fire, but, after retaining for a long time the very posture which he assumed in sitting down, he suddenly changed it in order to wring his hands with an air of the bitterest distress, and then, spreading them before his face, wept so plentifully that the tears found their way in floods through his slender fingers.

Nigel was in some degree rendered insensible to his own situation by his feelings for the intense agony by which so young and beautiful a creature seemed to be utterly overwhelmed; and, sitting down close beside the boy, he applied the most soothing terms which occurred, to endeavour to alleviate his distress; and, with an action which the difference of their age rendered natural, drew his hand kindly along the long hair of the disconsolate child. The lad appeared so shy as even to shrink from this slight approach to familiarity; yet, when Lord Glenvarloch, perceiving and allowing for his timidity, sat down on the farther side of the fire, he appeared to be more at his ease, and to hearken with some apparent interest to the arguments which from time to time Nigel used, to induce him to moderate, at least, the violence of his grief. As the boy listened, his tears, though they continued to flow freely, seemed

to escape from their source more easily, his sobs were less convulsive, and became gradually changed into low sighs, which succeeded each other, indicating as much sorrow, perhaps, but less alarm, than his first transports had shown.

‘Tell me who and what you are, my pretty boy,’ said Nigel. ‘Consider me, child, as a companion, who wishes to be kind to you, would you but teach him how he can be so.’

‘Sir — my lord, I mean,’ answered the boy very timidly, and in a voice which could scarce be heard even across the brief distance which divided them, ‘you are very good — and I — am very unhappy —’

A second fit of tears interrupted what else he had intended to say, and it required a renewal of Lord Glenvarloch’s good-natured expostulations and encouragements to bring him once more to such composure as rendered the lad capable of expressing himself intelligibly. At length, however, he was able to say — ‘I am sensible of your goodness, my lord, and grateful for it; but I am a poor, unhappy creature, and, what is worse, have myself only to thank for my misfortunes.’

‘We are seldom absolutely miserable, my young acquaintance,’ said Nigel, ‘without being ourselves more or less responsible for it. I may well say so, otherwise I had not been here to-day; but you are very young, and can have but little to answer for.’

‘Oh, sir! I wish I could say so. I have been self-willed and obstinate — and rash and ungovernable — and now — now, how dearly do I pay the price of it!’

‘Pshaw, my boy,’ replied Nigel; ‘this must be some childish frolic — some breaking out of bounds — some truant trick. And yet how should any of these have brought you to the Tower? There is something mysterious about you, young man, which I must inquire into.’

‘Indeed — indeed, my lord, there is no harm about me,’ said the boy, more moved, it would seem, to confession by the last words, by which he seemed considerably alarmed, than by all the kind expostulations and arguments which Nigel had previously used. ‘I am innocent — that is, I have done wrong, but nothing to deserve being in this frightful place.’

‘Tell me the truth, then,’ said Nigel, in a tone in which command mingled with encouragement; ‘you have nothing to fear from me, and as little to hope, perhaps; yet, placed as I am, I would know with whom I speak.’

‘With an unhappy — boy, sir — and idle and truantly dis-

posed, as your lordship said,' answered the lad, looking up and showing a countenance in which paleness and blushes succeeded each other, as fear and shamefacedness alternately had influence. 'I left my father's house without leave, to see the King hunt in the Park at Greenwich; there came a cry of "Treason," and all the gates were shut. I was frightened, and hid myself in a thicket, and I was found by some of the rangers and examined — and they said I gave no good account of myself — and so I was sent hither.'

'I am unhappy — a most unhappy being,' said Lord Glenvarloch, rising and walking through the apartment: 'nothing approaches me but shares my own bad fate! Death and imprisonment dog my steps, and involve all who are found near me. Yet this boy's story sounds strangely. You say you were examined, my young friend. Let me pray you to say whether you told your name, and your means of gaining admission into the Park; if so, they surely would not have detained you?'

'Oh, my lord,' said the boy, 'I took care not to tell them the name of the friend that let me in; and as to my father — I would not he knew where I now am for all the wealth in London!'

'But you do not expect,' said Nigel, 'that they will dismiss you till you let them know who and what you are?'

'What good will it do them to keep so useless a creature as myself?' said the boy; 'they must let me go, were it but out of shame.'

'Do not trust to that. Tell me your name and station; I will communicate them to the lieutenant; he is a man of quality and honour, and will not only be willing to procure your liberation, but also, I have no doubt, will intercede with your father. I am partly answerable for such poor aid as I can afford, to get you out of this embarrassment, since I occasioned the alarm owing to which you were arrested; so tell me your name and your father's name.'

'My name to *you*? Oh, never — never!' answered the boy, in a tone of deep emotion, the cause of which Nigel could not comprehend.

'Are you so much afraid of me, young man,' he replied, 'because I am here accused and a prisoner? Consider, a man may be both and deserve neither suspicion nor restraint. Why should you distrust me? You seem friendless, and I am myself so much in the same circumstances that I cannot but pity

your situation when I reflect on my own. Be wise; I have spoken kindly to you, I mean as kindly as I speak.'

'Oh, I doubt it not — I doubt it not, my lord,' said the boy, 'and I could tell you all — that is, almost all.'

'Tell me nothing, my young friend, excepting what may assist me in being useful to you,' said Nigel.

'You are generous, my lord,' said the boy; 'and I am sure — Oh, sure, I might safely trust to your honour. But yet — but yet — I am so sore beset. I have been so rash, so unguarded — I can never tell you of my folly. Besides, I have already told too much to one whose heart I thought I had moved — yet I find myself here.'

'To whom did you make this disclosure?' said Nigel.

'I dare not tell,' replied the youth.

'There is something singular about you, my young friend,' said Lord Glenvarloch, withdrawing with a gentle degree of compulsion the hand with which the boy had again covered his eyes; 'do not pain yourself with thinking on your situation just at present. Your pulse is high, and your hand feverish; lay yourself on yonder pallet, and try to compose yourself to sleep. It is the readiest and best remedy for the fancies with which you are worrying yourself.'

'I thank you for your considerate kindness, my lord,' said the boy; 'with your leave, I will remain for a little space quiet in this chair: I am better thus than on the couch. I can think undisturbedly on what I have done, and have still to do; and if God sends slumber to a creature so exhausted, it shall be most welcome.'

So saying, the boy drew his hand from Lord Nigel's, and, drawing around him and partly over his face the folds of his ample cloak, he resigned himself to sleep or meditation, while his companion, notwithstanding the exhausting scenes of this and the preceding day, continued his pensive walk up and down the apartment.

Every reader has experienced that times occur when, far from being lord of external circumstances, man is unable to rule even the wayward realm of his own thoughts. It was Nigel's natural wish to consider his own situation coolly, and fix on the course which it became him as a man of sense and courage to adopt; and yet, in spite of himself, and notwithstanding the deep interest of the critical state in which he was placed, it did so happen that his fellow-prisoner's situation occupied more of his thoughts than did his own. There was

no accounting for this wandering of the imagination, but also there was no striving with it. The pleading tones of one of the sweetest voices he had ever heard still rung in his ear, though it seemed that sleep had now fettered the tongue of the speaker. He drew near on tiptoe to satisfy himself whether it were so. The folds of the cloak hid the lower part of his face entirely; but the bonnet, which had fallen a little aside, permitted him to see the forehead streaked with blue veins, the closed eyes, and the long silken eyelashes.

'Poor child,' said Nigel to himself, as he looked on him, nestled up as it were in the folds of his mantle, 'the dew is yet on thy eyelashes, and thou hast fairly wept thyself asleep. Sorrow is a rough nurse to one so young and delicate as thou art. Peace be to thy slumbers, I will not disturb them. My own misfortunes require my attention, and it is to their contemplation that I must resign myself.'

He attempted to do so, but was crossed at every turn by conjectures which intruded themselves as before, and which all regarded the sleeper rather than himself. He was angry and vexed, and expostulated with himself concerning the overweening interest which he took in the concerns of one of whom he knew nothing, saving that the boy was forced into his company, perhaps as a spy, by those to whose custody he was committed; but the spell could not be broken, and the thoughts which he struggled to dismiss continued to haunt him.

Thus passed half an hour or more; at the conclusion of which the harsh sound of the revolving bolts was again heard, and the voice of the warder announced that a man desired to speak with Lord Glenvarloch. 'A man to speak with me, under my present circumstances! Who can it be?' And John Christie, his landlord of Paul's Wharf, resolved his doubts by entering the apartment.

'Welcome — most welcome, mine honest landlord!' said Lord Glenvarloch. 'How could I have dreamt of seeing you in my present close lodgings?' And at the same time, with the frankness of old kindness, he walked up to Christie and offered his hand; but John started back as from the look of a basilisk.

'Keep your courtesies to yourself, my lord,' said he, gruffly; 'I have had as many of them already as may serve me for my life.'

'Why, Master Christie,' said Nigel, 'what means this? I trust I have not offended you?'

'Ask me no questions, my lord,' said Christie, bluntly. 'I

am a man of peace : I came not hither to wrangle with you at this place and season. Just suppose that I am well informed of all the obligations from your honour's nobleness, and then acquaint me, in as few words as may be, where is the unhappy woman. What have you done with her ?'

'What have I done with her !' said Lord Glenvarloch. 'Done with whom ? I know not what you are speaking of.'

'Oh yes, my lord,' said Christie ; 'play surprise as well as you will, you must have some guess that I am speaking of the poor fool that was my wife, till she became your lordship's light o' love.'

'Your wife ! Has your wife left you ? and, if she has, do you come to ask her of me ?'

'Yes, my lord, singular as it may seem,' returned Christie, in a tone of bitter irony, and with a sort of grin widely discording from the discomposure of his features, the gleam of his eye, and the froth which stood on his lip, 'I do come to make that demand of your lordship. Doubtless, you are surprised I should take the trouble ; but, I cannot tell, great men and little men think differently. She has lain in my bosom and drunk of my cup, and, such as she is, I cannot forget that, though I will never see her again ; she must not starve, my lord, or do worse to gain bread, though I reckon your lordship may think I am robbing the public in trying to change her courses.'

'By my faith as a Christian, by my honour as a gentleman,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'if aught amiss has chanced with your wife, I know nothing of it. I trust in Heaven you are as much mistaken in imputing guilt to her as in supposing me her partner in it.'

'Fie ! fie ! my lord,' said Christie, 'why will you make it so tough ? She is but the wife of a clod-pated old chandler, who was idiot enough to marry a wench twenty years younger than himself. Your lordship cannot have more glory by it than you have had already ; and, as for advantage and solace, I take it Dame Nelly is now unnecessary to your gratification. I should be sorry to interrupt the course of your pleasure : an old wittol should have more consideration of his condition. But, your precious lordship being mewed up here among other choice jewels of the kingdom, Dame Nelly cannot, I take it, be admitted to share the hours of dalliance which ——' Here the incensed husband stammered, broke off his tone of irony, and proceeded, striking his staff against the ground — 'Oh that these false limbs of yours, which I wish had been hamstrung when they first

crossed my honest threshold, were free from the fetters they have well deserved! I would give you the odds of your youth, and your weapon, and would bequeath my soul to the foul fiend if I, with this piece of oak, did not make you such an example to all ungrateful, pick-thank courtiers that it should be a proverb to the end of time how John Christie swaddled his wife's fine leman!

'I understand not your insolence,' said Nigel, 'but I forgive it, because you labour under some strange delusion. In so far as I can comprehend your vehement charge, it is entirely undeserved on my part. You seem to impute to me the seduction of your wife; I trust she is innocent. For me, at least, she is as innocent as an angel in bliss. I never thought of her — never touched her hand or cheek, save in honourable courtesy.'

'Oh, ay — courtesy! that is the very word. She always praised your lordship's *honourable courtesy*. Ye have cozened me between ye, with your courtesy. My lord — my lord, you came to us no very wealthy man, you know it. It was for no lucre of gain I took you and your swashbuckler, your Don Diego yonder, under my poor roof. I never cared if the little room were let or no: I could live without it. If you could not have paid for it, you should never have been asked. All the wharf knows John Christie has the means and spirit to do a kindness. When you first darkened my honest doorway, I was as happy as a man need to be, who is no youngster, and has the rheumatism. Nelly was the kindest and best-humoured wench — we might have a word now and then about a gown or a ribbon, but a kinder soul on the whole, and a more careful, considering her years, till you came — and what is she now! But I will not be a fool to cry, if I can help it. *What* she is, is not the question, but *where* she is; and that I must learn, sir, of you.'

'How can you, when I tell you,' replied Nigel, 'that I am as ignorant as yourself, or rather much more so? Till this moment, I never heard of any disagreement betwixt your dame and you.'

'That is a lie,' said John Christie, bluntly.

'How, you base villain!' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'do you presume on my situation? If it were not that I hold you mad, and perhaps made so by some wrong sustained, you should find my being weaponless were no protection: I would beat your brains out against the wall.'

'Ay — ay,' answered Christie, 'bully as ye list. Ye have been at the ordinaries, and in Alsatia, and learned the ruffian's rant, I doubt not. But I repeat, you have spoken an untruth, when you said you knew not of my wife's falsehood; for, when you were twitted with it among your gay mates, it was a common jest among you, and your lordship took all the credit they would give you for your gallantry and gratitude.'

There was a mixture of truth in this part of the charge which disconcerted Lord Glenvarloch exceedingly; for he could not, as a man of honour, deny that Lord Dalgarno and others had occasionally jested with him on the subject of Dame Nelly, and that, though he had not played exactly *le fanfaron des vices qu'il n'avoit pas*, he had not at least been sufficiently anxious to clear himself of the suspicion of such a crime to men who considered it as a merit. It was therefore with some hesitation, and in a sort of qualifying tone, that he admitted that some idle jests had passed upon such a supposition, although without the least foundation in truth.

John Christie would not listen to his vindication any longer. 'By your own account,' he said, 'you permitted lies to be told of you in jest. How do I know you are speaking truth, now you are serious? You thought it, I suppose, a fine thing to wear the reputation of having dishonoured an honest family; who will not think that you had real grounds for your base bravado to rest upon? I will not believe otherwise for one, and therefore, my lord, mark what I have to say. You are now yourself in trouble. As you hope to come through it safely, and without loss of life and property, tell me where this unhappy woman is. Tell me, if you hope for Heaven; tell me, if you fear Hell; tell me, as you would not have the curse of an utterly ruined woman and a broken-hearted man attend you through life, and bear witness against you at the Great Day which shall come after death. You are moved, my lord, I see it. I cannot forget the wrong you have done me. I cannot even promise to forgive it; but — tell me, and you shall never see me again, or hear more of my reproaches.'

'Unfortunate man,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'you have said more — far more than enough to move me deeply. Were I at liberty, I would lend you my best aid to search out him who has wronged you, the rather that I do suspect my having been your lodger has been in some degree the remote cause of bringing the spoiler into the sheepfold.'

'I am glad your lordship grants me so much,' said John

Christie, resuming the tone of embittered irony with which he had opened the singular conversation ; ' I will spare you farther reproach and remonstrance ; your mind is made up, and so is mine. So ho, warder ! ' The warder entered, and John went on — ' I want to get out, brother. Look well to your charge : it were better that half the wild beasts in their dens yonder were turned loose upon Tower Hill than that this same smooth-faced, civil-spoken gentleman were again returned to honest men's company ! '

So saying, he hastily left the apartment ; and Nigel had full leisure to lament the waywardness of his fate, which seemed never to tire of persecuting him for crimes of which he was innocent, and investing him with the appearances of guilt which his mind abhorred. He could not, however, help acknowledging to himself that all the pain which he might sustain from the present accusation of John Christie was so far deserved, from his having suffered himself, out of vanity, or rather an unwillingness to encounter ridicule, to be supposed capable of a base inhospitable crime, merely because fools called it an affair of gallantry ; and it was no balsam to the wound, when he recollected what Richie had told him of his having been ridiculed behind his back by the gallants of the ordinary for affecting the reputation of an intrigue which he had not in reality spirit enough to have carried on. His simulation had, in a word, placed him in the unlucky predicament of being rallied as a braggart amongst the dissipated youths, with whom the reality of the amour would have given him credit ; whilst, on the other hand, he was branded as an inhospitable seducer by the injured husband, who was obstinately persuaded of his guilt.

CHAPTER XXIX

How fares the man on whom good men would look
With eyes where scorn and censure combated,
But that kind Christian love hath taught the lesson —
That they who merit most contempt and hate
Do most deserve our pity.

Old Play.

IT might have seemed natural that the visit of John Christie should have entirely diverted Nigel's attention from his slumbering companion, and, for a time, such was the immediate effect of the chain of new ideas which the incident introduced; yet, soon after the injured man had departed, Lord Glenvarloch began to think it extraordinary that the boy should have slept so soundly while they talked loudly in his vicinity. Yet he certainly did not appear to have stirred. Was he well — was he only feigning sleep? He went close to him to make his observations, and perceived that he had wept, and was still weeping, though his eyes were closed. He touched him gently on the shoulder; the boy shrunk from his touch, but did not awake. He pulled him harder, and asked him if he was sleeping.

'Do they waken folks in your country to know whether they are asleep or no?' said the boy, in a peevish tone.

'No, my young sir,' answered Nigel; 'but when they weep in the manner you do in your sleep, they awaken them to see what ails them.'

'It signifies little to any one what ails me,' said the boy.

'True,' replied Lord Glenvarloch; 'but you knew before you went to sleep how little I could assist you in your difficulties, and you seemed disposed, notwithstanding, to put some confidence in me.'

'If I did, I have changed my mind,' said the lad.

'And what may have occasioned this change of mind, I trow?' said Lord Glenvarloch. 'Some men speak through their sleep; perhaps you have the gift of hearing in it?'

'Many would call that speech a fair challenge,' said Lord Glenvarloch, looking on her fixedly; 'women do not masquerade in men's clothes to make use of men's weapons.'

'I have no such purpose,' said the seeming boy. 'I have other means of protection, and powerful; but I would first know what is *your* purpose.'

'An honourable and a most respectful one,' said Lord Glenvarloch; 'whatever you are—whatever motive may have brought you into this ambiguous situation, I am sensible—every look, word, and action of yours makes me sensible—that you are no proper subject of importunity, far less of ill-usage. What circumstances can have forced you into so doubtful a situation, I know not; but I feel assured there is, and can be, nothing in them of premeditated wrong, which should expose you to cold-blooded insult. From me you have nothing to dread.'

'I expected nothing less from your nobleness, my lord,' answered the female; 'my adventure, though I feel it was both desperate and foolish, is not so very foolish, nor my safety here so utterly unprotected, as at first sight, and in this strange dress, it may appear to be. I have suffered enough, and more than enough, by the degradation of having been seen in this unfeminine attire, and the comments you must necessarily have made on my conduct; but I thank God that I am so far protected that I could not have been subjected to insult unavenged.'

When this extraordinary explanation had proceeded thus far, the warder appeared, to place before Lord Glenvarloch a meal which, for his present situation, might be called comfortable, and which, if not equal to the cookery of the celebrated Chevalier Beaujeu, was much superior in neatness and cleanliness to that of Alsatia. A warder attended to do the honours of the table, and made a sign to the disguised female to rise and assist him in his functions. But Nigel, declaring that he knew the youth's parents, interfered, and caused his companion to eat along with him. She consented with a sort of embarrassment which rendered her pretty features yet more interesting. Yet she maintained with a natural grace that sort of good-breeding which belongs to the table; and it seemed to Nigel, whether already prejudiced in her favour by the extraordinary circumstances of their meeting, or whether really judging from what was actually the fact, that he had seldom seen a young person comport herself with more decorous pro-

priety, mixed with ingenuous simplicity ; while the consciousness of the peculiarity of her situation threw a singular colouring over her whole demeanour, which could be neither said to be formal, nor easy, nor embarrassed, but was compounded of, and shaded with, an interchange of all these three characteristics. Wine was placed on the table, of which she could not be prevailed on to taste a glass. Their conversation was, of course, limited by the presence of the warder to the business of the table ; but Nigel had, long ere the cloth was removed, formed the resolution, if possible, of making himself master of this young person's history, the more especially as he now began to think that the tones of her voice and her features were not so strange to him as he had originally supposed. This, however, was a conviction which he adopted slowly, and only as it dawned upon him from particular circumstances during the course of the repast.

At length the prison-meal was finished, and Lord Glenvarloch began to think how he might most easily enter upon the topic he meditated, when the warder announced a visitor.

'Soh !' said Nigel, something displeased, 'I find even a prison does not save one from importunate visitations.'

He prepared to receive his guest, however, while his alarmed companion flew to the large cradle-shaped chair which had first served her as a place of refuge, drew her cloak around her, and disposed herself as much as she could to avoid observation. She had scarce made her arrangements for that purpose when the door opened, and the worthy citizen, George Heriot, entered the prison-chamber.

He cast around the apartment his usual sharp, quick glance of observation, and, advancing to Nigel, said — 'My lord, I wish I could say I was happy to see you.'

'The sight of those who are unhappy themselves, Master Heriot, seldom produces happiness to their friends. I, however, am glad to see you.'

He extended his hand, but Heriot bowed with much formal complaisance, instead of accepting the courtesy, which in those times, when the distinction of ranks was much guarded by etiquette and ceremony, was considered as a distinguished favour.

'You are displeased with me, Master Heriot,' said Lord Glenvarloch, reddening, for he was not deceived by the worthy citizen's affectation of extreme reverence and respect.

'By no means, my lord,' replied Heriot ; 'but I have been

in France, and have thought it as well to import, along with other more substantial articles, a small sample of that good-breeding which the French are so renowned for.'

'It is not kind of you,' said Nigel, 'to bestow the first use of it on an old and obliged friend.'

Heriot only answered to this observation with a short dry cough, and then proceeded.

'Hem! hem! — I say, ahem! My lord, as my French politeness may not carry me far, I would willingly know whether I am to speak as a friend, since your lordship is pleased to term me such; or whether I am, as befits my condition, to confine myself to the needful business which must be treated of between us.'

'Speak as a friend by all means, Master Heriot,' said Nigel; 'I perceive you have adopted some of the numerous prejudices against me, if not all of them. Speak out, and frankly — what I cannot deny I will at least confess.'

'And I trust, my lord, redress,' said Heriot.

'So far as is in my power, certainly,' answered Nigel.

'Ah! my lord,' continued Heriot, 'that is a melancholy though a necessary restriction; for how lightly may any one do an hundred times more than the degree of evil which it may be within his power to repair to the sufferers and to society! But we are not alone here,' he said, stopping, and darting his shrewd eye towards the muffled figure of the disguised maiden, whose utmost efforts had not enabled her so to adjust her position as altogether to escape observation.

More anxious to prevent her being discovered than to keep his own affairs private, Nigel hastily answered — 'T is a page of mine; you may speak freely before him. He is of France, and knows no English.'

'I am then to speak freely,' said Heriot, after a second glance at the chair; 'perhaps my words may be more free than welcome.'

'Go on, sir,' said Nigel; 'I have told you I can bear reproof.'

'In one word, then, my lord, why do I find you in this place, and whelmed with charges which must blacken a name rendered famous by ages of virtue?'

'Simply, then, you find me here,' said Nigel, 'because, to begin from my original error, I would be wiser than my father.'

'It was a difficult task, my lord,' replied Heriot; 'your father was voiced generally as the wisest and one of the bravest men of Scotland.'

'He commanded me,' continued Nigel, 'to avoid all gam-

bling; and I took upon me to modify this injunction into regulating my play according to my skill, means, and the course of my luck.'

'Ay, self-opinion, acting on a desire of acquisition, my lord; you hoped to touch pitch and not to be defiled,' answered Heriot. 'Well, my lord, you need not say, for I have heard with much regret, how far this conduct diminished your reputation. Your next error I may without scruple remind you of. My lord — my lord, in whatever degree Lord Dalgarno may have failed towards you, the son of his father should have been sacred from your violence.'

'You speak in cold blood, Master Heriot, and I was smarting under a thousand wrongs inflicted on me under the mask of friendship.'

'That is, he gave your lordship bad advice, and you ——' said Heriot.

'Was fool enough to follow his counsel,' answered Nigel. 'But we will pass this, Master Heriot, if you please. Old men and young men, men of the sword and men of peaceful occupation, always have thought, always will think, differently on such subjects.'

'I grant,' answered Heriot, 'the distinction between the old goldsmith and the young nobleman; still you should have had patience for Lord Huntinglen's sake, and prudence for your own. Supposing your quarrel just ——'

'I pray you to pass on to some other charge,' said Lord Glenvarloch.

'I am not your accuser, my lord; but I trust in Heaven that your own heart has already accused you bitterly on the inhospitable wrong which your late landlord has sustained at your hand.'

'Had I been guilty of what you allude to,' said Lord Glenvarloch — 'had a moment of temptation hurried me away, I had long ere now most bitterly repented it. But, whoever may have wronged the unhappy woman, it was not I. I never heard of her folly until within this hour.'

'Come, my lord,' said Heriot, with some severity, 'this sounds too much like affectation. I know there is among our modern youth a new creed respecting adultery as well as homicide. I would rather hear you speak of a revision of the Decalogue, with mitigated penalties in favour of the privileged orders — I would rather hear you do this, than deny a fact in which you have been known to glory.'

'Glory! I never did, never would have taken honour to myself from such a cause,' said Lord Glenvarloch. 'I could not prevent other idle tongues and idle brains from making false inferences.'

'You would have known well enough how to stop their mouths, my lord,' replied Heriot, 'had they spoke of you what was displeasing to your ears, and what the truth did not warrant. Come, my lord, remember your promise to confess; and, indeed, to confess is, in this case, in some slight sort to redress. I will grant you are young, the woman handsome, and, as I myself have observed, light-headed enough. Let me know where she is. Her foolish husband has still some compassion for her, will save her from infamy, perhaps, in time, receive her back; for we are a good-natured generation, we traders. Do not, my lord, emulate those who work mischief merely for the pleasure of doing so; it is the very devil's worst quality.'

'Your grave remonstrances will drive me mad,' said Nigel. 'There is a show of sense and reason in what you say; and yet it is positively insisting on my telling the retreat of a fugitive of whom I know nothing earthly.'

'It is well, my lord,' answered Heriot, coldly. 'You have a right, such as it is, to keep your own secrets; but, since my discourse on these points seems so totally unavailing, we had better proceed to business. Yet your father's image rises before me and seems to plead that I should go on.'

'Be it as you will, sir,' said Glenvarloch; 'he who doubts my word shall have no additional security for it.'

'Well, my lord, in the sanctuary at Whitefriars — a place of refuge so unsuitable to a young man of quality and character — I am told a murder was committed.'

'And you believe that I did the deed, I suppose?'

'God forbid, my lord!' said Heriot. 'The coroner's inquest hath sat, and it appeared that your lordship, under your assumed name of Grahame, behaved with the utmost bravery.'

'No compliment, I pray you!' said Nigel. 'I am only too happy to find that I did not murder, or am not believed to have murdered, the old man.'

'True, my lord,' said Heriot; 'but even in this affair there lacks explanation. Your lordship embarked this morning in a wherry with a female, and, it is said, an immense sum of money, in specie and other valuables; but the woman has not since been heard of.'

'I parted with her at Paul's Wharf,' said Nigel, 'where she went ashore with her charge. I gave her a letter to that very man, John Christie.'

'Ay, that is the waterman's story; but John Christie denies that he remembers anything of the matter.'

'I am sorry to hear this,' said the young nobleman; 'I hope in Heaven she has not been trepanned for the treasure she had with her.'

'I hope not, my lord,' replied Heriot; 'but men's minds are much disturbed about it. Our national character suffers on all hands. Men remember the fatal case of Lord Sanquhar, hanged for the murder of a fencing-master; and exclaim, they will not have their wives whored and their property stolen by the nobility of Scotland.'

'And all this is laid to my door!' said Nigel; 'my exculpation is easy.'

'I trust so, my lord,' said Heriot; 'nay, in this particular, I do not doubt it. But why did you leave Whitefriars under such circumstances?'

'Master Reginald Lowestoffe sent a boat for me, with intimation to provide for my safety.'

'I am sorry to say,' replied Heriot, 'that he denies all knowledge of your lordship's motions, after having despatched a messenger to you with some baggage.'

'The watermen told me they were employed by him.'

'Watermen!' said Heriot. 'One of these proves to be an idle apprentice, an old acquaintance of mine, the other has escaped; but the fellow who is in custody persists in saying he was employed by your lordship, and you only.'

'He lies!' said Lord Glenvarloch, hastily. 'He told me Master Lowestoffe had sent him. I hope that kind-hearted gentleman is at liberty?'

'He is,' answered Heriot; 'and has escaped with a rebuke from the benchers, for interfering in such a matter as your lordship's. The court desire to keep well with the young Templars in these times of commotion, or he had not come off so well.'

'That is the only word of comfort I have heard from you,' replied Nigel. 'But this poor woman — she and her trunk were committed to the charge of two porters.'

'So said the pretended waterman; but none of the fellows who ply at the wharf will acknowledge the employment. I see the idea makes you uneasy, my lord; but every effort is made to discover the poor woman's place of retreat — if, indeed,

she yet lives. And now, my lord, my errand is spoken, so far as it relates exclusively to your lordship; what remains is matter of business of a more formal kind.'

'Let us proceed to it without delay,' said Lord Glenvarloch. 'I would hear of the affairs of any one rather than of my own.'

'You cannot have forgotten, my lord,' said Heriot, 'the transaction which took place some weeks since at Lord Huntinglen's, by which a large sum of money was advanced for the redemption of your lordship's estate?'

'I remember it perfectly,' said Nigel; 'and your present austerity cannot make me forget your kindness on the occasion.'

Heriot bowed gravely, and went on—'That money was advanced under the expectation and hope that it might be replaced by the contents of a grant to your lordship, under the royal sign-manual, in payment of certain monies due by the crown to your father. I trust your lordship understood the transaction at the time; I trust you now understand my resumption of its import, and hold it to be correct?'

'Undeniably correct,' answered Lord Glenvarloch. 'If the sums contained in the warrant cannot be recovered, my lands become the property of those who paid off the original holders of the mortgage, and now stand in their right.'

'Even so, my lord,' said Heriot. 'And your lordship's unhappy circumstances having, it would seem, alarmed these creditors, they are now, I am sorry to say, pressing for one or other of these alternatives—possession of the land or payment of their debt.'

'They have a right to one or other,' answered Lord Glenvarloch; 'and as I cannot do the last in my present condition, I suppose they must enter on possession.'

'Stay, my lord,' replied Heriot; 'if you have ceased to call me a friend to your person, at least you shall see I am willing to be such to your father's house, were it but for the sake of your father's memory. If you will trust me with the warrant under the sign-manual, I believe circumstances do now so stand at court that I may be able to recover the money for you.'

'I would do so gladly,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'but the casket which contains it is not in my possession. It was seized when I was arrested at Greenwich.'

'It will be no longer withheld from you,' said Heriot; 'for, I understand, my master's natural good sense, and some information which he has procured, I know not how, has induced him to contradict the whole charge of the attempt on his person.'

It is entirely hushed up ; and you will only be proceeded against for your violence on Lord Dalgarno, committed within the verge of the palace, and that you will find heavy enough to answer.'

'I will not shrink under the weight,' said Lord Glenvarloch. 'But that is not the present point. If I had that casket——'

'Your baggage stood in the little ante-room, as I passed,' said the citizen ; 'the casket caught my eye. I think you had it of me. It was my old friend Sir Faithful Frugal's. Ay, he too had a son——'

Here he stopped short.

'A son who, like Lord Glenvarloch's, did no credit to his father. Was it not so you would have ended the sentence, Master Heriot?' asked the young nobleman.

'My lord, it was a word spoken rashly,' answered Heriot. 'God may mend all in his own good time. This, however, I will say, that I have sometimes envied my friends their fair and flourishing families ; and yet have I seen such changes when death has removed the head, so many rich men's sons penniless, the heirs of so many knights and nobles acreless, that I think mine own estate and memory, as I shall order it, has a fair chance of outliving those of greater men, though God has given me no heir of my name. But this is from the purpose. Ho ! warder, bring in Lord Glenvarloch's baggage.'

The officer obeyed. 'Seals had been placed upon the trunk and casket, but were now removed,' the warder said, 'in consequence of the subsequent orders from court, and the whole was placed at the prisoner's free disposal.'

Desirous to bring this painful visit to a conclusion, Lord Glenvarloch opened the casket, and looked through the papers which it contained, first hastily, and then more slowly and accurately ; but it was all in vain. The sovereign's signed warrant had disappeared.

'I thought and expected nothing better,' said George Heriot, bitterly. 'The beginning of evil is the letting out of water. Here is a fair heritage lost, I dare say, on a foul cast at dice or a conjuring-trick at cards ! My lord, your surprise is well played. I give you full joy of your accomplishments. I have seen many as young brawlers and spendthrifts, but never so young and accomplished a dissembler. Nay, man, never bend your angry brows on me. I speak in bitterness of heart, from what I remember of your worthy father ; and if his son hears of his degeneracy from no one else, he shall hear it from the old goldsmith.'

This new suspicion drove Nigel to the very extremity of his patience; yet the motives and zeal of the good old man, as well as the circumstances of suspicion which created his displeasure, were so excellent an excuse for it, that they formed an absolute curb on the resentment of Lord Glenvarloch, and constrained him, after two or three hasty exclamations, to observe a proud and sullen silence. At length, Master Heriot resumed his lecture.

‘Hark you, my lord,’ he said, ‘it is scarce possible that this most important paper can be absolutely assigned away. Let me know in what obscure corner, and for what petty sum, it lies pledged; something may yet be done.’

‘Your efforts in my favour are the more generous,’ said Lord Glenvarloch, ‘as you offer them to one whom you believe you have cause to think hardly of; but they are altogether unavailing. Fortune has taken the field against me at every point. Even let her win the battle.’

‘Zouns!’ exclaimed Heriot, impatiently, ‘you would make a saint swear! Why, I tell you, if this paper, the loss of which seems to sit so light on you, be not found, farewell to the fair lordship of Glenvarloch — firth and forest, lea and furrow, lake and stream — all that has been in the house of Olifaunt since the days of William the Lion!’

‘Farewell to them, then,’ said Nigel, ‘and that moan is soon made.’

‘Sdeath! my lord, you will make more moan for it ere you die,’ said Heriot, in the same tone of angry impatience.

‘Not I, my old friend,’ said Nigel. ‘If I mourn, Master Heriot, it will be for having lost the good opinion of a worthy man, and lost it, as I must say, most undeservedly.’

‘Ay — ay, young man,’ said Heriot, shaking his head, ‘make me believe that if you can. To sum the matter up,’ he said, rising from his seat and walking towards that occupied by the disguised female, ‘for our matters are now drawn into small compass, you shall as soon make me believe that this masquerading mummer, on whom I now lay the hand of paternal authority, is a French page, who understands no English.’

So saying, he took hold of the supposed page’s cloak, and, not without some gentle degree of violence, led into the middle of the apartment the disguised fair one, who in vain attempted to cover her face, first with her mantle and afterwards with her hands; both which impediments Master Heriot removed, something unceremoniously, and gave to view the detected

daughter of the old chronologist, his own fair god-daughter, Margaret Ramsay.

'Here is goodly gear!' he said; and, as he spoke, he could not prevent himself from giving her a slight shake, for we have elsewhere noticed that he was a severe disciplinarian. 'How comes it, minion, that I find you in so shameless a dress and so unworthy a situation? Nay, your modesty is now mistimed, it should have come sooner. Speak, or I will ——'

'Master Heriot,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'whatever right you may have over this maiden elsewhere, while in my apartment she is under my protection.'

'Your protection, my lord! a proper protector! And how long, mistress, have you been under my lord's protection? Speak out, forsooth!'

'For the matter of two hours, godfather,' answered the maiden, with a countenance bent to the ground and covered with blushes, 'but it was against my will.'

'Two hours!' repeated Heriot, 'space enough for mischief. My lord, this is, I suppose, another victim offered to your character of gallantry — another adventure to be boasted of at Beaujeu's ordinary? Methinks the roof under which you first met this silly maiden should have secured *her*, at least, from such a fate.'

'On my honour, Master Heriot,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'you remind me now, for the first time, that I saw this young lady in your family. Her features are not easily forgotten, and yet I was trying in vain to recollect where I had last looked on them. For your suspicions, they are as false as they are injurious both to her and me. I had but discovered her disguise as you entered. I am satisfied, from her whole behaviour, that her presence here in this dress was involuntary; and God forbid that I had been capable of taking advantage of it to her prejudice.'

'It is well mouthed, my lord,' said Master Heriot; 'but a cunning clerk can read the Apocrypha as loud as the Scripture. Frankly, my lord, you are come to that pass where your words will not be received without a warrant.'

'I should not speak, perhaps,' said Margaret, the natural vivacity of whose temper could never be long suppressed by any situation, however disadvantageous, 'but I cannot be silent. Godfather, you do me wrong, and no less wrong to this young nobleman. You say his words want a warrant. I know where to find a warrant for some of them, and the rest I deeply and devoutly believe without one.'

‘And I thank you, maiden,’ replied Nigel, ‘for the good opinion you have expressed. I am at that point, it seems, though how I have been driven to it I know not, where every fair construction of my actions and motives is refused me. I am the more obliged to her who grants me that right which the world denies me. For you, lady, were I at liberty, I have a sword and arm should know how to guard your reputation.’

‘Upon my word, a perfect Amadis and Oriana!’ said George Heriot. ‘I should soon get my throat cut betwixt the knight and the princess, I suppose, but that the beefeaters are happily within halloo. Come—come, lady light o’ love, if you mean to make your way with me, it must be by plain facts, not by speeches from romaunts and play-books. How, in Heaven’s name, came you here?’

‘Sir,’ answered Margaret, ‘since I must speak, I went to Greenwich this morning with Monna Paula, to present a petition to the King on the part of the Lady Hermione.’

‘Mercy-a-gad!’ exclaimed Heriot, ‘is she in the dance, too? Could she not have waited my return to stir in her affairs? But I suppose the intelligence I sent her had rendered her restless. Ah! woman—woman! he that goes partner with you had need of a double share of patience, for you will bring none into the common stock. Well, but what on earth had this embassy of Monna Paula’s to do with your absurd disguise? Speak out.’

‘Monna Paula was frightened,’ answered Margaret, ‘and did not know how to set about the errand, for you know she scarce ever goes out of doors—and so—and so—I agreed to go with her to give her courage; and, for the dress, I am sure you remember I wore it at a Christmas mumming, and you thought it not unbeseeming.’

‘Yes, for a Christmas parlour,’ said Heriot, ‘but not to go a-masking through the country in. I do remember it, minion, and I knew it even now; that and your little shoe there, linked with a hint I had in the morning from a friend, or one who called himself such, led to your detection.’

Here Lord Glenvarloch could not help giving a glance at the pretty foot which even the staid citizen thought worth recollection; it was but a glance, for he saw how much the least degree of observation added to Margaret’s distress and confusion.

‘And tell me, maiden,’ continued Master Heriot, for what we have observed was bye-play, ‘did the Lady Hermione know of this fair work?’

‘I dared not have told her for the world,’ said Margaret; ‘she thought one of our apprentices went with Monna Paula.’ It may be here noticed, that the words ‘our apprentices’ seemed to have in them something of a charm to break the fascination with which Lord Glenvarloch had hitherto listened to the broken yet interesting details of Margaret’s history.

‘And wherefore went he not? He had been a fitter companion for Monna Paula than you, I wot,’ said the citizen.

‘He was otherwise employed,’ said Margaret, in a voice scarcely audible.

Master George darted a hasty glance at Nigel, and when he saw his features betoken no consciousness, he muttered to himself—‘It must be better than I feared. And so this cursed Spaniard, with her head full, as they all have, of disguises, trap-doors, rope-ladders, and masks, was jade and fool enough to take you with her on this wild-goose errand? And how sped you, I pray?’

‘Just as we reached the gate of the Park,’ replied Margaret, ‘the cry of “Treason” was raised. I know not what became of Monna, but I ran till I fell into the arms of a very decent serving-man, called Linklater; and I was fain to tell him I was your god-daughter, and so he kept the rest of them from me, and got me to speech of his Majesty, as I entreated him to do.’

‘It is the only sign you showed in the whole matter that common sense had not utterly deserted your little skull,’ said Heriot.

‘His Majesty,’ continued the damsel, ‘was so gracious as to receive me alone, though the courtiers cried out against the danger to his person, and would have searched me for arms, God help me! but the King forbade it. I fancy he had a hint from Linklater how the truth stood with me.’

‘Well, maiden, I ask not what passed,’ said Heriot; ‘it becomes not me to pry into my master’s secrets. Had you been closeted with his grandfather, the Red Tod of St. Andrews, as Davie Lindsay used to call him, by my faith, I should have had my own thoughts of the matter; but our master, God bless him, is douce and temperate, and Solomon in everything save in the chapter of wives and concubines.’

‘I know not what you mean, sir,’ answered Margaret. ‘His Majesty was most kind and compassionate, but said I must be sent hither, and that the lieutenant’s lady, the Lady Mansel, would have a charge of me, and see that I sustained no wrong; and the King promised to send me in a tilted barge, and under

conduct of a person well known to you ; and thus I come to be in the Tower.

'But how or why in this apartment, nymph ?' said George Heriot. 'Explain that to me, for I think the riddle needs reading.'

'I cannot explain it, sir, further than that the Lady Mansel sent me here, in spite of my earnest prayers, tears, and entreaties. I was not afraid of anything, for I knew I should be protected. But I could have died then — could die now — for very shame and confusion !'

'Well — well, if your tears are genuine,' said Heriot, 'they may the sooner wash out the memory of your fault. Knows your father ought of this escape of you ?'

'I would not for the world he did,' replied she : 'he believes me with the Lady Hermione.'

'Ay, honest Davie can regulate his horologes better than his family. Come, daniel, now I will escort you back to the Lady Mansel, and pray her, of her kindness, that, when she is again entrusted with a goose, she will not give it to the fox to keep. The warders will let us pass to my lady's lodgings. I trust.'

'Stay but one moment,' said Lord Glenvarloch. 'Whatever hard opinion you may have formed of me, I forgive you, for time will show that you do me wrong ; and you yourself, I think, will be the first to regret the injustice you have done me. But involve not in your suspicion this young person, for whose purity of thought angels themselves should be vouchers. I have marked every look, every gesture ; and whilst I can draw breath, I shall ever think of her with —'

'Think not at all of her, my lord,' answered George Heriot, interrupting him ; 'it is, I have a notion, the best favour you can do her ; or think of her as the daughter of Davie Ramsay, the clock-maker, no proper subject for fine speeches, romantic adventures, or high-flown Arcadian compliments. I give you god-den, my lord. I think not altogether so harshly as my speech may have spoken. If I can help — that is, if I saw my way clearly through this labyrinth — but it avails not talking now. I give your lordship god-den. Here, warder ! Permit us to pass to the Lady Mansel's apartment.'

The warder said he must have orders from the lieutenant ; and as he retired to procure them, the parties remained standing near each other, but without speaking, and scarce looking at each other save by stealth — a situation which, in two of the party at least, was sufficiently embarrassing. The difference of

rank, though in that age a consideration so serious, could not prevent Lord Glenvarloch from seeing that Margaret Ramsay was one of the prettiest young women he had ever beheld ; from suspecting, he could scarce tell why, that he himself was not indifferent to her ; from feeling assured that he had been the cause of much of her present distress — admiration, self-love, and generosity, acting in favour of the same object ; and when the yeoman returned with permission to his guests to withdraw, Nigel's obeisance to the beautiful daughter of the mechanic was marked with an expression which called up in her cheeks as much colour as any incident of the eventful day had hitherto excited. She returned the courtesy timidly and irresolutely, clung to her godfather's arm, and left the apartment, which, dark as it was, had never yet appeared so obscure to Nigel as when the door closed behind her.

CHAPTER XXX

Yet though thou shouldst be dragg'd in scorn
To yonder ignominious tree,
Thou shalt not want one faithful friend
To share the cruel fates' decree.

Ballad of Jemmy Dawson.

MASTER GEORGE HERIOT and his ward, as she might justly be termed, for his affection to Margaret imposed on him all the cares of a guardian, were ushered by the yeoman of the guard to 'the lodging of the lieutenant, where they found him seated with his lady. They were received by both with that decorous civility which Master Heriot's character and supposed influence demanded, even at the hand of a punctilious old soldier and courtier like Sir Edward Mansel. Lady Mansel received Margaret with like courtesy, and informed Master George that she was now only her guest, and no longer her prisoner.

'She is at liberty,' she said, 'to return to her friends under your charge; such is his Majesty's pleasure.'

'I am glad of it, madam,' answered Heriot, 'but only I could have wished her freedom had taken place before her foolish interview with that singular young man; and I marvel your ladyship permitted it.'

'My good Master Heriot,' said Sir Edward, 'we act according to the commands of one better and wiser than ourselves: our orders from his Majesty must be strictly and literally obeyed; and I need not say that the wisdom of his Majesty doth more than ensure —'

'I know his Majesty's wisdom well,' said Heriot; 'yet there is an old proverb about fire and flax — well, let it pass.'

'I see Sir Mungo Malagrowthier stalking towards the door of the lodging,' said the Lady Mansel, 'with the gait of a lame crane; it is his second visit this morning.'

'He brought the warrant for discharging Lord Glenvarloch of the charge of treason,' said Sir Edward.

'And from him,' said Heriot, 'I heard much of what had befallen; for I came from France only late last evening, and somewhat unexpectedly.'

As they spoke, Sir Mungo entered the apartment, saluted the lieutenant of the Tower and his lady with ceremonious civility, honoured George Heriot with a patronising nod of acknowledgment, and accosted Margaret with—'Hey! my young charge, you have not doffed your masculine attire yet?'

'She does not mean to lay it aside, Sir Mungo,' said Heriot, speaking loud, 'until she has had satisfaction from you for betraying her disguise to me, like a false knight; and in very deed, Sir Mungo, I think, when you told me she was rambling about in so strange a dress, you might have said also that she was under Lady Mansel's protection.'

'That was the King's secret, Master Heriot,' said Sir Mungo, throwing himself into a chair with an air of atrabilarious importance; 'the other was a well-meaning hint to yourself, as the girl's friend.'

'Yes,' replied Heriot, 'it was done like yourself: enough told to make me unhappy about her, not a word which could relieve my uneasiness.'

'Sir Mungo will not hear that remark,' said the lady; 'we must change the subject. Is there any news from court, Sir Mungo? you have been to Greenwich?'

'You might as well ask me, madam,' answered the knight, 'whether there is any news from hell.'

'How, Sir Mungo—how!' said Sir Edward; 'measure your words something better. You speak of the court of King James.'

'Sir Edward, if I spoke of the court of the twelve kaisers, I would say it is as confused for the present as the infernal regions. Courtiers of forty years' standing, and such I may write myself, are as far to seek in the matter as a minnow in the Maelstrom. Some folks say the King has frowned on the Prince, some that the Prince has looked grave on the Duke, some that Lord Glenvarloch will be hanged for high treason, and some that there is matter against Lord Dalgarno that may cost him as much as his head's worth.'

'And what do you, that are a courtier of forty years' standing, think of it all?' said Sir Edward Mansel.

'Nay—nay, do not ask him, Sir Edward,' said the lady, with an expressive look to her husband.

'Sir Mungo is too witty,' added Master Heriot, 'to remember

that he who says aught that may be repeated to his own prejudice does but load a piece for any of the company to shoot him dead with, at their pleasure and convenience.'

'What!' said the bold knight, 'you think I am afraid of the trepan? Why now, what if I should say that Dalgarno has more wit than honesty, the Duke more sail than ballast, the Prince more pride than prudence, and that the King ——' The Lady Mansel held up her finger in a warning manner — 'that the King is my very good master, who has given me, for forty years and more, dog's wages, videlicet, bones and beating. Why now, all this is said, and Archie Armstrong¹ says worse than this of the best of them every day.'

'The more fool he,' said George Heriot; 'yet he is not so utterly wrong, for folly is his best wisdom. But do not you, Sir Mungo, set your wit against a fool's, though he be a court fool.'

'A fool, said you?' replied Sir Mungo, not having fully heard what Master Heriot said, or not choosing to have it thought so — 'I have been a fool indeed, to hang on at a close-fisted court here, when men of understanding and men of action have been making fortunes in every other place of Europe. But here a man comes indifferently off unless he gets a great key to turn (looking at Sir Edward), or can beat tattoo with a hammer on a pewter plate. Well, sirs, I must make as much haste back on mine errand as if I were a fee'd messenger. Sir Edward and my lady, I leave my commendations with you; and my good-will with you, Master Heriot; and for this breaker of bounds, if you will act by my counsel, some maceration by fasting, and a gentle use of the rod, is the best cure for her giddy fits.'

'If you propose for Greenwich, Sir Mungo,' said the lieutenant, 'I can spare you the labour: the King comes immediately to Whitehall.'

'And that must be the reason the council are summoned to meet in such hurry,' said Sir Mungo. 'Well, I will, with your permission, go to the poor lad Glenvarloch, and bestow some comfort on him.'

The lieutenant seemed to look up and pause for a moment as if in doubt.

'The lad will want a pleasant companion, who can tell him the nature of the punishment which he is to suffer, and other matters of concernment. I will not leave him until I show

¹ The celebrated court jester.

him how absolutely he hath ruined himself from feather to spur, how deplorable is his present state, and how small his chance of mending it.'

'Well, Sir Mungo,' replied the lieutenant, 'if you really think all this likely to be very consolatory to the party concerned, I will send a warder to conduct you.'

'And I,' said George Heriot, 'will humbly pray of Lady Mansel that she will lend some of her handmaiden's apparel to this giddy-brained girl; for I shall forfeit my reputation if I walk up Tower Hill with her in that mad guise — and yet the silly lassie looks not so ill in it neither.'

'I will send my coach with you instantly,' said the obliging lady.

'Faith, madam, and if you will honour us with such courtesy, I will gladly accept it at your hands,' said the citizen, 'for business presses hard on me, and the forenoon is already lost, to little purpose.'

The coach, being ordered accordingly, transported the worthy citizen and his charge to his mansion in Lombard Street. There he found his presence was anxiously expected by the Lady Hermione, who had just received an order to be in readiness to attend upon the royal privy council in the course of an hour; and upon whom, in her inexperience of business, and long retirement from society and the world, the intimation had made as deep an impression as if it had not been the necessary consequence of the petition which she had presented to the King by Monna Paula. George Heriot gently blamed her for taking any steps in an affair so important until his return from France, especially as he had requested her to remain quiet, in a letter which accompanied the evidence he had transmitted to her from Paris. She could only plead in answer the influence which her immediately stirring in the matter was likely to have on the affair of her kinsman Lord Glenvarloch, for she was ashamed to acknowledge how much she had been gained on by the eager importunity of her youthful companion. The motive of Margaret's eagerness was, of course, the safety of Nigel; but we must leave it to time to show in what particulars that came to be connected with the petition of the Lady Hermione. Meanwhile, we return to the visit with which Sir Mungo Malagrowth favoured the afflicted young nobleman in his place of captivity.

The knight, after the usual salutations, and having prefaced his discourse with a great deal of professed regret for Nigel's

situation, sat down beside him, and, composing his grotesque features into the most lugubrious despondence, began his raven-song as follows :—

‘I bless God, my lord, that I was the person who had the pleasure to bring his Majesty’s mild message to the lieutenant, discharging the higher prosecution against ye, for anything meditated against his Majesty’s sacred person ; for, admit you be prosecuted on the lesser offence, or breach of privilege of the palace and its precincts, *usque ad mutilationem*—even to dismemberation—as it is most likely you will, yet the loss of a member is nothing to being hanged and drawn quick, after the fashion of a traitor.’

‘I should feel the shame of having deserved such a punishment,’ answered Nigel, ‘more than the pain of undergoing it.’

‘Doubtless, my lord, the having, as you say, deserved it must be an excruciation to your own mind,’ replied his tormentor—‘a kind of mental and metaphysical hanging, drawing, and quartering, which may be in some measure equipollent with the external application of hemp, iron, fire, and the like, to the outer man.’

‘I say, Sir Mungo,’ repeated Nigel, ‘and beg you to understand my words, that I am unconscious of any error, save that of having arms on my person when I chanced to approach that of my sovereign.’

‘Ye are right, my lord, to acknowledge nothing,’ said Sir Mungo. ‘We have an old proverb, Confess, and—so forth. And indeed, as to the weapons, his Majesty has a special ill-will at all arms¹ whatsoever, and more especially pistols ; but, as I said, there is an end of that matter. I wish you as well through the next, which is altogether unlikely.’

‘Surely, Sir Mungo,’ answered Nigel, ‘you yourself might say something in my favour concerning the affair in the Park. None knows better than you that I was at that moment urged by wrongs of the most heinous nature, offered to me by Lord Dalgarno, many of which were reported to me by yourself, much to the inflammation of my passion.’

‘Alack-a-day ! — alack-a-day !’ replied Sir Mungo, ‘I remember but too well how much your choler was inflamed, in spite of the various remonstrances which I made to you respecting the sacred nature of the place. Alas ! — alas ! you cannot say you leaped into the mire for want of warning.’

‘I see, Sir Mungo, you are determined to remember nothing which can do me service,’ said Nigel.

¹ See James I.’s Dislike to Arms. Note 37.

him how absolutely he hath ruined himself from feather to spur, how deplorable is his present state, and how small his chance of mending it.'

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The coach, being ordered accordingly, transported the worthy citizen and his charge to his mansion in Lombard Street. There he found his presence was anxiously expected by the Lady Hermione, who had just received an order to be in readiness to attend upon the royal privy council in the course of an hour; and upon whom, in her inexperience of business, and long retirement from society and the world, the intimation had made as deep an impression as if it had not been the necessary consequence of the petition which she had presented to the King by Monna Paula. George Heriot gently blamed her for taking any steps in an affair so important until his return from France, especially as he had requested her to remain quiet, in a letter which accompanied the evidence he had transmitted to her from Paris. She could only plead in answer the influence which her immediately stirring in the matter was likely to have on the affair of her kinsman Lord Glenvarloch, for she was ashamed to acknowledge how much she had been gained on by the eager importunity of her youthful companion. The motive of Margaret's eagerness was, of course, the safety of Nigel; but we must leave it to time to show in what particulars that came to be connected with the petition of the Lady Hermione. Meanwhile, we return to the visit with which Sir Mungo Malagrowth favoured the afflicted young nobleman in his place of captivity.

The knight, after the usual salutations, and having prefaced his discourse with a great deal of professed regret for Nigel's

Well, sir, Stubbs, or Tubbs, lost no whit of countenance, until the fallow clapped the hissing-hot iron on his raw stump. My lord, it fizzed like a rasher of bacon, and the fallow set up an elritch screech, which made some think his courage was abated; but not a whit, for he plucked off his hat with his left hand, and waved it, crying, "God save the Queen, and confound all evil counsellors!" The people gave him three cheers, which he deserved for his stout heart; and, truly, I hope to see your lordship suffer with the same magnanimity.¹

'I thank you, Sir Mungo,' said Nigel, who had not been able to forbear some natural feelings of an unpleasant nature during this lively detail; 'I have no doubt the exhibition will be a very engaging one to you and the other spectators, whatever it may prove to the party principally concerned.'

'Vera engaging,' answered Sir Mungo, 'vera interesting—vera interesting indeed, though not altogether so much so as an execution for high treason. I saw Digby, the Winters, Fawkes, and the rest of the Gunpowder gang, suffer for that treason, whilk was a vera grand spectacle, as well in regard to their sufferings as to their constancy in enduring.'

'I am the more obliged to your goodness, Sir Mungo,' replied Nigel, 'that has induced you, although you have lost the sight, to congratulate me on my escape from the hazard of making the same edifying appearance.'

'As you say, my lord,' answered Sir Mungo, 'the loss is chiefly in appearance. Nature has been very bountiful to us, and has given duplicates of some organs, that we may endure the loss of one of them, should some such circumstance chance in our pilgrimage. See my poor dexter, abridged to one thumb, one finger, and a stump—by the blow of my adversary's weapon, however, and not by any carnifical knife. Weel, sir, this poor maimed hand doth me, in some sort, as much service as ever; and, admit yours to be taken off by the wrist, you have still your left hand for your service, and are better off than the little Dutch dwarf here about town, who threads a needle, limns, writes, and tosses a pike merely by means of his feet, without ever a hand to help him.'

'Well, Sir Mungo,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'this is all no doubt very consolatory; but I hope the King will spare my hand to fight for him in battle, where, notwithstanding all your kind encouragement, I could spend my blood much more cheerfully than on a scaffold.'

¹ See Punishment of Stubbs by Mutilation. Note 38.

'It is even a sad truth,' replied Sir Mungo, 'that your lordship was but too like to have died on a scaffold — not a soul to speak for you but that deluded lassie, Maggie Ramsay.'

'Whom mean you?' said Nigel, with more interest than he had hitherto shown in the knight's communications.

'Nay, who should I mean but that travestied lassie whom we dined with when we honoured Heriot, the goldsmith? Ye ken best how ye have made interest with her, but I saw her on her knees to the King for you. She was committed to my charge, to bring her up hither in honour and safety. Had I had my own will, I would have had her to Bridewell, to flog the wild blood out of her — a cutty-quean, to think of wearing the breeches, and not so much as married yet!'

'Hark ye, Sir Mungo Malagrowth, answered Nigel, 'I would have you talk of that young person with fitting respect.'

'With all the respect that befits your lordship's paramour and Davie Ramsay's daughter I shall certainly speak of her, my lord,' said Sir Mungo, assuming a dry tone of irony.

Nigel was greatly disposed to have made a serious quarrel of it, but with Sir Mungo such an affair would have been ridiculous; he smothered his resentment, therefore, and conjured him to tell what he had heard and seen respecting this young person.

'Simply, that I was in the ante-room when she had audience, and heard the King say, to my great perplexity, "*Pulchra sane puella*"; and Maxwell, who hath but indifferent Latin ears, thought that his Majesty called on him by his own name of Sawney, and thrust into the presence, and there I saw our sovereign James, with his own hand, raising up the lassie, who, as I said heretofore, was travestied in man's attire. I should have had my own thoughts of it, but our gracious master is auld, and was nae great gilravager amang the queans even in his youth; and he was comforting her in his own way, and saying, "Ye needna greet about it, my bonny woman, Glenvarlochides shall have fair play; and, indeed, when the hurry was off our spirits, we could not believe that he had any design on our person. And touching his other offences, we will look wisely and closely into the matter." So I got charge to take the young fence-louper to the Tower here, and deliver her to the charge of Lady Mansel; and his Majesty charged me to say not a word to her about your offences. "For," said he, "the poor thing is breaking her heart for him."'

'And on this you have charitably founded the opinion to

the prejudice of this young lady which you have now thought proper to express?' said Lord Glenvarloch.

'In honest truth, my lord,' replied Sir Mungo, 'what opinion would you have me form of a wench who gets into male habiliments, and goes on her knees to the King for a wild young nobleman? I wot not what the fashionable word may be, for the phrase changes, though the custom abides. But truly I must needs think this young leddy—if you call Watchie Ramsay's daughter a young leddy—demeans herself more like a leddy of pleasure than a leddy of honour.'

'You do her egregious wrong, Sir Mungo,' said Nigel; 'or rather you have been misled by appearances.'

'So will all the world be misled, my lord,' replied the satirist, 'unless you were doing that to disabuse them which your father's son will hardly judge it fit to do.'

'And what may that be, I pray you?'

'E'en marry the lass—make her Leddy Glenvarloch. Ay—ay, ye may start, but it's the course you are driving on. Rather marry than do worse, if the worst be not done already.'

'Sir Mungo,' said Nigel, 'I pray you to forbear this subject, and rather return to that of the mutilation, upon which it pleased you to enlarge a short while since.'

'I have not time at present,' said Sir Mungo, hearing the clock strike four; 'but so soon as you shall have received sentence, my lord, you may rely on my giving you the fullest detail of the whole solemnity; and I give you my word, as a knight and gentleman, that I will myself attend you on the scaffold, whoever may cast sour looks on me for doing so. I bear a heart to stand by a friend in the worst of times.'

So saying, he wished Lord Glenvarloch farewell, who felt as heartily rejoiced at his departure, though it may be a bold word, as any person who had ever undergone his society.

But, when left to his own reflections, Nigel could not help feeling solitude nearly as irksome as the company of Sir Mungo Malagrowth. The total wreck of his fortune, which seemed now to be rendered unavoidable by the loss of the royal warrant, that had afforded him the means of redeeming his paternal estate, was an unexpected and additional blow. When he had seen the warrant he could not precisely remember; but was inclined to think it was in the casket when he took out money to pay the miser for his lodgings at Whitefriars. Since then, the casket had been almost constantly under his own eye, except during the short time he was separated from his

baggage by the arrest in Greenwich Park. It might, indeed, have been taken out at that time, for he had no reason to think either his person or his property was in the hands of those who wished him well; but, on the other hand, the locks of the strong-box had sustained no violence that he could observe, and, being of a particular and complicated construction, he thought they could scarce be opened without an instrument made on purpose, adapted to their peculiarities, and for this there had been no time. But, speculate as he would on the matter, it was clear that this important document was gone, and probable that it had passed into no friendly hands. 'Let it be so,' said Nigel to himself; 'I am scarcely worse off respecting my prospects of fortune than when I first reached this accursed city. But to be hampered with cruel accusations and stained with foul suspicions; to be the object of pity of the most degrading kind to yonder honest citizen, and of the malignity of that envious and atrabilious courtier, who can endure the good fortune and good qualities of another no more than the mole can brook sunshine — this is indeed a deplorable reflection; and the consequences must stick to my future life, and impede whatever my head, or my hand, if it is left me, might be able to execute in my favour.'

The feeling that he is the object of general dislike and dereliction seems to be one of the most unendurably painful to which a human being can be subjected. The most atrocious criminals, whose nerves have not shrunk from perpetrating the most horrid cruelty, endure more from the consciousness that no man will sympathise with their sufferings than from apprehension of the personal agony of their impending punishment; and are known often to attempt to palliate their enormities, and sometimes altogether to deny what is established by the clearest proof, rather than to leave life under the general ban of humanity. It was no wonder that Nigel, labouring under the sense of general, though unjust, suspicion, should, while pondering on so painful a theme, recollect that one at least had not only believed him innocent, but hazarded herself, with all her feeble power, to interpose in his behalf.

'Poor girl!' he repeated — 'poor, rash, but generous maiden! your fate is that of her in Scottish story, who thrust her arm into the staple of the door, to oppose it as a bar against the assassins who threatened the murder of her sovereign.¹ The deed of devotion was useless, save to give an immortal name

¹ See Assassination of James I. of Scotland. Note 39.

to her by whom it was done, and whose blood flows, it is said, in the veins of my house.'

I cannot explain to the reader whether the recollection of this historical deed of devotion, and the lively effect which the comparison, a little overstrained perhaps, was likely to produce in favour of Margaret Ramsay, was not qualified by the concomitant ideas of ancestry and ancient descent with which that recollection was mingled. But the contending feelings suggested a new train of ideas. 'Ancestry,' he thought, 'and ancient descent, what are they to me? My patrimony alienated — my title become a reproach — for what can be so absurd as titled beggary? — my character subjected to suspicion — I will not remain in this country; and should I, at leaving it, procure the society of one so lovely, so brave, and so faithful, who should say that I derogated from the rank which I am virtually renouncing?'

There was something romantic and pleasing, as he pursued this picture of an attached and faithful pair, becoming all the world to each other, and stemming the tide of fate arm in arm; and to be linked thus with a creature so beautiful, and who had taken such devoted and disinterested concern in his fortunes, formed itself into such a vision as romantic youth loves best to dwell upon.

Suddenly his dream was painfully dispelled by the recollection that its very basis rested upon the most selfish ingratitude on his own part. Lord of his castle and his towers, his forests and fields, his fair patrimony and noble name, his mind would have rejected, as a sort of impossibility, the idea of elevating to his rank the daughter of a mechanic; but, when degraded from his nobility and plunged into poverty and difficulties, he was ashamed to feel himself not unwilling that this poor girl, in the blindness of her affection, should abandon all the better prospects of her own settled condition to embrace the precarious and doubtful course which he himself was condemned to. The generosity of Nigel's mind recoiled from the selfishness of the plan of happiness which he projected; and he made a strong effort to expel from his thoughts for the rest of the evening this fascinating female, or, at least, not to permit them to dwell upon the perilous circumstance that she was at present the only creature living who seemed to consider him as an object of kindness.

He could not, however, succeed in banishing her from his slumbers, when, after having spent a weary day, he betook

himself to a perturbed couch. The form of Margaret mingled with the wild mass of dreams which his late adventures had suggested ; and even when, copying the lively narrative of Sir Mungo, fancy presented to him the blood bubbling and hissing on the heated iron, Margaret stood behind him like a spirit of light, to breathe healing on the wound. At length nature was exhausted by these fantastic creations, and Nigel slept, and slept soundly, until awakened in the morning by the sound of a well-known voice, which had often broken his slumbers about the same hour.

CHAPTER XXXI

Marry, come up, sir, with your gentle blood !
Here's a red stream beneath this coarse blue doublet
That warms the heart as kindly as if drawn
From the far source of old Assyrian kings,
Who first made mankind subject to their sway.

Old Play.

THE sounds to which we alluded in our last were no other than the grumbling tones of Richie Moniplies's voice.

This worthy, like some other persons who rank high in their own opinion, was very apt, when he could have no other auditor, to hold conversation with one who was sure to be a willing listener—I mean with himself. He was now brushing and arranging Lord Glenvarloch's clothes, with as much composure and quiet assiduity as if he had never been out of his service, and grumbling betwixt whiles to the following purpose—'Humph—ay, time cloak and jerkin were through my hands; I question if horse-hair has been passed over them since they and I last parted. The embroidery finely frayed too; and the gold buttons of the cloak—by my conscience, and as I am an honest man, there is a round dozen of them gane! This comes of Alsatian frolics.—God keep us with His grace, and not give us over to our own devices! I see no sword, but that will be in respect of present circumstances.'

Nigel for some time could not help believing that he was still in a dream, so improbable did it seem that his domestic, whom he supposed to be in Scotland, should have found him out, and obtained access to him, in his present circumstances. Looking through the curtains, however, he became well assured of the fact, when he beheld the stiff and bony length of Richie, with a visage charged with nearly double its ordinary degree of importance, employed sedulously in brushing his master's cloak, and refreshing himself with whistling or humming, from interval to interval, some snatch of an old melancholy Scottish ballad—

tune. Although sufficiently convinced of the identity of the party, Lord Glenvarloch could not help expressing his surprise in the superfluous question — 'In the name of Heaven, Richie, is this you?'

'And wha else suld it be, my lord?' answered Richie. 'I dreamna that your lordship's levee in this place is like to be attended by ony that are not bounden thereto by duty.'

'I am rather surprised,' answered Nigel, 'that it should be attended by any one at all — especially by you, Richie; for you know that we parted, and I thought you had reached Scotland long since.'

'I crave your lordship's pardon, but we have not parted yet, nor are soon likely so to do; for there gang twa folks' votes to the unmaking of a bargain, as to the making of ane. Though it was your lordship's pleasure so to conduct yourself that we were like to have parted, yet it was not, on reflection, my will to be gone. To be plain, if your lordship does not ken when you have a good servant, I ken when I have a kind master; and to say truth, you will be easier served now than ever, for there is not much chance of your getting out of bounds.'

'I am indeed bound over to good behaviour,' said Lord Glenvarloch, with a smile; 'but I hope you will not take advantage of my situation to be too severe on my follies, Richie?'

'God forbid, my lord — God forbid!' replied Richie, with an expression betwixt a conceited consciousness of superior wisdom and real feeling, 'especially in consideration of your lordship's having a due sense of them. I did indeed remonstrate, as was my humble duty, but I scorn to cast that up to your lordship now. Na — na, I am mysell an erring creature, very conscious of some small weaknesses: there is no perfection in man.'

'But, Richie,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'although I am much obliged to you for your proffered service, it can be of little use to me here, and may be of prejudice to yourself.'

'Your lordship shall pardon me again,' said Richie, whom the relative situation of the parties had invested with ten times his ordinary dogmatism; 'but, as I will manage the matter, your lordship shall be greatly benefited by my service, and I myself no whit prejudiced.'

'I see not how that can be, my friend,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'since even as to your pecuniary affairs —'

'Touching my pecuniars, my lord,' replied Richie, 'I am indifferently weel provided; and, as it chanches, my living here will be no burden to your lordship or distress to myself. Only

I crave permission to annex certain conditions to my servitude with your lordship.'

'Annex what you will,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'for you are pretty sure to take your own way whether you make any conditions or not. Since you will not leave me, which were, I think, your wisest course, you must, and I suppose will, serve me only on such terms as you like yourself.'

'All that I ask, my lord,' said Richie, gravely, and with a tone of great moderation, 'is to have the uninterrupted command of my own motions, for certain important purposes which I have now in hand, always giving your lordship the solace of my company and attendance at such times as may be at once convenient for me and necessary for your service.'

'Of which, I suppose, you constitute yourself sole judge,' replied Nigel, smiling.

'Unquestionably, my lord,' answered Richie, gravely; 'for your lordship can only know what yourself want; whereas I, who see both sides of the picture, ken both what is the best for your affairs and what is the most needful for my own.'

'Richie, my good friend,' said Nigel, 'I fear this arrangement, which places the master much under the disposal of the servant, would scarce suit us if we were both at large; but a prisoner as I am, I may be as well at your disposal as I am at that of so many other persons; and so you may come and go as you list, for I suppose you will not take my advice, to return to your own country and leave me to my fate.'

'The deil be in my feet if I do,' said Moniplies. 'I am not the lad to leave your lordship in foul weather, when I followed you and fed upon you through the whole summer day. And besides, there may be brave days behind, for a' that has come and gane yet; for

It's hame, and it's hame, and it's hame we fain would be,
Though the cloud is in the lift, and the wind is on the lea;
For the sun through the mirk blinks blithe on mine ee,
Says — "I'll shine on ye yet in your ain country!"'

Having sung this stanza in the manner of a ballad-singer whose voice has been cracked by matching his windpipe against the bugle of the north blast, Richie Moniplies aided Lord Glenvarloch to rise, attended his toilet with every possible mark of the most solemn and deferential respect, then waited upon him at breakfast, and finally withdrew, pleading that he had business of importance, which would detain him for some hours.

Although Lord Glenvarloch necessarily expected to be occasionally annoyed by the self-conceit and dogmatism of Richie Moniplies's character, yet he could not but feel the greatest pleasure from the firm and devoted attachment which this faithful follower had displayed in the present instance, and indeed promised himself an alleviation of the *ennui* of his imprisonment in having the advantage of his services. It was, therefore, with pleasure that he learned from the warder that his servant's attendance would be allowed at all times when the general rules of the fortress permitted the entrance of strangers.

In the meanwhile, the magnanimous Richie Moniplies had already reached Tower Wharf. Here, after looking with contempt on several scullers by whom he was plied, and whose services he rejected with a wave of his hand, he called with dignity, 'First oars!' and stirred into activity several lounging tritons of the higher order, who had not, on his first appearance, thought it worth while to accost him with proffers of service. He now took possession of a wherry, folded his arms within his ample cloak, and sitting down in the stern with an air of importance, commanded them to row to Whitehall Stairs. Having reached the palace in safety, he demanded to see Master Linklater, the under-clerk of his Majesty's kitchen. The reply was, that he was not to be spoken withal, being then employed in cooking a mess of cock-a-leekie for the King's own mouth.

'Tell him,' said Moniplies, 'that it is a dear countryman of his who seeks to converse with him on matter of high import.'

'A dear countryman!' said Linklater, when this pressing message was delivered to him. 'Well, let him come in and be d—d, that I should say sae! This now is some red-headed, long-legged, gillie-white-foot frae the West Port, that, hearing of my promotion, is come up to be a turn-broche or deputy scullion through my interest. It is a great hindrance to any man who would rise in the world, to have such friends to hang by his skirts, in hope of being towed up along with him. Ha! Richie Moniplies, man, is it thou? And what has brought ye here? If they should ken thee for the loon that scared the horse the other day——!'

'No more o' that, neighbour,' said Richie. 'I am just here on the auld errand: I maun speak with the King.'

'The King! Ye are red-wud,' said Linklater; then shouted to his assistants in the kitchen, 'Look to the broches, ye knaves. *Pisces purga. Salsamenta fac macerentur pulchre.* I will make

you understand Latin, ye knaves, as becomes the scullions of King James.' Then in a cautious tone, to Richie's private ear, he continued, 'Know ye not how ill your master came off the other day? I can tell you that job made some folk shake for their office.'

'Weel, but, Laurie, ye maun befriend me this time, and get this wee bit siffication slipped into his Majesty's ain most gracious hand. I promise you the contents will be most grateful to him.'

'Richie,' answered Linklater, 'you have certainly sworn to say your prayers in the porter's lodge, with your back bare, and twa grooms, with dog-whips, to cry "amen" to you.'

'Na—na, Laurie, lad,' said Richie, 'I ken better what belangs to siffications than I did yon day; and ye will say that yoursell, if ye will but get that bit note to the King's hand.'

'I will have neither hand nor foot in the matter,' said the cautious clerk of the kitchen; 'but there is his Majesty's mess of cock-a-leekie just going to be served to him in his closet; I cannot prevent you from putting the letter between the gilt bowl and the platter; his sacred Majesty will see it when he lifts the bowl, for he aye drinks out the broth.'

'Enough said,' replied Richie, and deposited the paper accordingly, just before a page entered to carry away the mess to his Majesty.

'Aweel—aweel, neighbour,' said Laurence, when the mess was taken away, 'if ye have done ony thing to bring yoursell to the withy or the scourging-post, it is your ain wilful deed.'

'I will blame no other for it,' said Richie; and, with that undismayed pertinacity of conceit which made a fundamental part of his character, he abode the issue, which was not long of arriving.

In a few minutes Maxwell himself arrived in the apartment, and demanded hastily who had placed a writing on the King's trencher. Linklater denied all knowledge of it; but Richie Moniplies, stepping boldly forth, pronounced the emphatical confession, 'I am the man.'

'Follow me, then,' said Maxwell, after regarding him with a look of great curiosity.

They went up a private staircase—even that private staircase the privilege of which at court is accounted a nearer road to power than the *grandes entrées* themselves. Arriving in what Richie described as an 'ill redd-up' ante-room, the usher made a sign to him to stop, while he went into the King's

useful attribute of his situation, a tenacious memory, which recollected every one with whom he was brought into casual contact — ‘ye are the self-same traitor who had weel-nigh coupit us endlang on the causey of our ain courtyard? But we stuck by our mare. *Equam memento rebus in arduis servare.* Weel, be not dismayed, Richie; for, as many have turned traitors, it is but fair that a traitor, now and then, suld prove to be, *contra expectanda*, a true man. How cam ye by our jewels, man? cam ye on the part of George Heriot?’

‘In no sort,’ said Richie. ‘May it please your Majesty, I come as Harry Wynd fought, utterly for my own hand, and on no man’s errand; as, indeed, I call no one master, save Him that made me, your most gracious Majesty who governs me, and the noble Nigel Olifaunt, Lord of Glenvarloch, who maintained me as lang as he could maintain himself, poor nobleman!’

‘Glenvarlochides again!’ exclaimed the King; ‘by my honour, he lies in ambush for us at every corner! Maxwell knocks at the door. It is George Heriot come to tell us he cannot find these jewels. Get thee behind the arras, Richie — stand close, man — sneeze not — cough not — breathe not! Jingling Geordie is so damnably ready with his gold-ends of wisdom, and sae cursedly backward with his gold-ends of siller, that, by our royal saul, we are glad to get a hair in his neck.’

Richie got behind the arras, in obedience to the commands of the good-natured King, while the monarch, who never allowed his dignity to stand in the way of a frolic, having adjusted, with his own hand, the tapestry so as to complete the ambush, commanded Maxwell to tell him what was the matter without. Maxwell’s reply was so low as to be lost by Richie Moniplies, the peculiarity of whose situation by no means abated his curiosity and desire to gratify it to the uttermost.

‘Let Geordie Heriot come in,’ said the King; and, as Richie could observe through a slit in the tapestry, the honest citizen, if not actually agitated, was at least discomposed. The King, whose talent for wit, or humour, was precisely of a kind to be gratified by such a scene as ensued, received his homage with coldness, and began to talk to him with an air of serious dignity, very different from the usual indecorous levity of his behaviour. ‘Master Heriot,’ he said, ‘if we aright remember, we opignorated in your hands certain jewels of the crown, for a certain sum of money. Did we or did we not?’

‘My most gracious sovereign,’ said Heriot, ‘indisputably your Majesty was pleased to do so.’

'My lord and liege king,' said Heriot, 'God knows, if my bearing blame or shame in this matter would keep it from your Majesty, it were my duty to endure both, as a servant grateful for many benefits; but when your Majesty considers the violent death of the man himself, the disappearance of his daughter and of his wealth, I trust you will remember that I warned your Majesty, in humble duty, of the possibility of such casualties, and prayed you not to urge me to deal with him on your behalf.'

'But you brought me nae better means,' said the King — 'Geordie, ye brought me nae better means. I was like a deserted man; what could I do but grip to the first siller that offered, as a drowning man grasps to the willow-wand that comes readiest? And now, man, what for have ye not brought back the jewels? They are surely above ground, if ye wad make strict search.'

'All strict search has been made, may it please your Majesty,' replied the citizen: 'hue and cry has been sent out everywhere, and it has been found impossible to recover them.'

'Difficult, ye mean, Geordie, not impossible,' replied the King; 'for that whilk is impossible is either naturally so, *exempli gratiâ*, to make two into three; or morally so, as to make what is truth falsehood; but what is only difficult may come to pass, with assistance of wisdom and patience; as, for example, Jingling Geodrie, look here!' And he displayed the recovered treasure to the eyes of the astonished jeweller, exclaiming, with great triumph, 'What say ye to that, Jingler? By my sceptre and crown, the man stares as if he took his native prince for a warlock! us that are the very *malleus malificarum*, the contunding and contritulating hammer of all witches, sorcerers, magicians, and the like; he thinks we are taking a touch of the black art ourselfs! But gang thy way, honest Geordie; thou art a good plain man, but nane of the seven sages of Greece — gang thy way, and mind the soothfast word which you spoke, small time syne, that there is one in this land that comes near to Solomon, King of Israel, in all his gifts, except in his love to strange women, forbye the daughter of Pharaoh.'

If Heriot was surprised at seeing the jewels so unexpectedly produced at the moment the King was upbraiding him for the loss of them, this allusion to the reflection which had escaped him while conversing with Lord Glenvarloch altogether completed his astonishment; and the King was so delighted with the superiority which it gave him at that moment, that he

rubbed his hands, chuckled, and, finally, his sense of dignity giving way to the full feeling of triumph, he threw himself into his easy-chair, and laughed with unconstrained violence till he lost his breath, and the tears ran plentifully down his cheeks as he strove to recover it. Meanwhile, the royal cachinnation was echoed out by a discordant and portentous laugh from behind the arras, like that of one who, little accustomed to give way to such emotions, feels himself at some particular impulse unable either to control or to modify his obstreperous mirth. Heriot turned his head with new surprise towards the place from which sounds so unfitting the presence of a monarch seemed to burst with such emphatic clamour.¹

The King, too, somewhat sensible of the indecorum, rose up, wiped his eyes, and calling, 'Tod Lowrie, come out o' your den,' he produced from behind the arras the length of Richie Moniplies, still laughing with as unrestrained mirth as ever did gossip at a country christening. 'Whisht, man — whisht, man,' said the King; 'ye needna nicher that gait, like a cusser at a caup o' corn, e'en though it was a pleasing jest, and our ain framing. And yet to see Jingling Geordie, that hauds himself so much the wiser than other folks — to see him — ha! ha! ha! — in the vein of Euclio apud Plautum, distressing himself to recover what was lying at his elbow —

*Perii, interii, occidi — quo curram? quo non curram? —
Tene, tene — quem? quis? nescio — nihil video.*

Ah! Geordie, your een are sharp enough to look after gowd and silver, gems, rubies, and the like of that, and yet ye kenna how to come by them when they are lost. Ay — ay, look at them, man — look at them; they are a' right and tight, sound and round, not a doublet crept in amongst them.'

George Heriot, when his first surprise was over, was too old a courtier to interrupt the King's imaginary triumph, although he darted a look of some displeasure at honest Richie, who still continued on what is usually termed the broad grin. He quietly examined the stones, and finding them all perfect, he honestly and sincerely congratulated his Majesty on the recovery of a treasure which could not have been lost without some dishonour to the crown; and asked to whom he himself was to pay the sums for which they had been pledged, observing, that he had the money by him in readiness.

'Ye are in a deevil of a hurry, when there is paying in the

¹ See Richie Moniplies behind the Arras. Note 40.

case, Geordie,' said the King. 'What's a' the haste, man? The jewels were restored by an honest, kindly countryman of ours. There he stands, and wha kens if he wants the money on the nail, or if he might not be as weel pleased wi' a bit rescript on our treasury some six months hence? Ye ken that our exchequer is even at a low ebb just now, and ye cry "pay — pay — pay," as if we had all the mines of Ophir.'

'Please your Majesty,' said Heriot, 'if this man has the real right to these monies, it is doubtless at his will to grant forbearance, if he will. But when I remember the guise in which I first saw him, with a tattered cloak and a broken head, I can hardly conceive it. Are not you Richie Moniplies, with the King's favour?'

'Even sae, Master Heriot — of the ancient and honourable house of Castle Collop, near to the West Port of Edinburgh,' answered Richie.

'Why, please your Majesty, he is a poor serving-man,' said Heriot. 'This money can never be honestly at his disposal.'

'What for no?' said the King. 'Wad ye have naeboddy spraickle up the brae but yoursell, Geordie? Your ain cloak was thin enough when ye cam here, though ye have lined it gay and weel. And for serving-men, there has mony a red-shank come over the Tweed wi' his master's wallet on his shoulders, that now rustles it wi' his six followers behind him. There stands the man himsell; speer at him, Geordie.'

'His may not be the best authority in the case,' answered the cautious citizen.

'Tut — tut, man,' said the King, 'ye are over scrupulous. The knave deer-stealers have an apt phrase, "*Non est inquirendum unde venit* VENISON." He that brings the gudes hath surely a right to dispose of the gear. Hark ye, friend, speak the truth and shame the deil. Have ye plenary powers to dispose on the redemption-money as to delay of payments or the like, ay or no?'

'Full power, an it like your gracious Majesty,' answered Richie Moniplies; 'and I am maist willing to subscribe to whatsoever may in any wise accommodate your Majesty anent the redemption-money, trusting your Majesty's grace will be kind to me in one sma' favour.'

'Ey, man,' said the King, 'come ye to me there? I thought ye wad e'en be like the rest of them. One would think our subjects' lives and goods were all our ain, and holden of us at our free will; but when we stand in need of ony matter of

siller from them, which chances more frequently than we would it did, deil a boddle is to be had, save on the auld terms of giff-gaff. It is just niffer for niffer. Aweel, neighbour, what is it that ye want — some monopoly, I reckon? Or it may be a grant of kirk lands and teinds, or a knighthood, or the like? Ye maun be reasonable, unless ye propose to advance more money for our present occasions.'

'My liege,' answered Richie Moniplies, 'the owner of these monies places them at your Majesty's command, free of all pledge or usage as long as it is your royal pleasure, providing your Majesty will condescend to show some favour to the noble Lord Glenvarloch, presently prisoner in your royal Tower of London.'

'How, man — how, man — how, man!' exclaimed the King, reddening and stammering, but with emotions more noble than those by which he was sometimes agitated. 'What is it that you dare to say to us? Sell our justice! — sell our mercy! and we a crowned king, sworn to do justice to our subjects in the gate, and responsible for our stewardship to Him that is over all kings?' Here he reverently looked up, touched his bonnet, and continued, with some sharpness — 'We dare not traffic in such commodities, sir; and, but that ye are a poor ignorant creature, that have done us this day some not unpleasant service, we wad have a red iron driven through your tongue, *in terrorem* of others. Awa' with him, Geordie; pay him, plack and bawbee, out of our monies in your hands, and let them care that come ahint.'

Richie, who had counted with the utmost certainty upon the success of this master-stroke of policy, was like an architect whose whole scaffolding at once gives way under him. He caught, however, at what he thought might break his fall. 'Not only the sum for which the jewels were pledged,' he said, 'but the double of it, if required, should be placed at his Majesty's command, and even without hope or condition of repayment, if only —'

But the King did not allow him to complete the sentence, crying out with greater vehemence than before, as if he dreaded the stability of his own good resolutions — 'Awa' wi' him — swith awa' wi' him! It is time he were gane, if he doubles his bode that gate. And, for your life, letna Steenie or ony of them hear a word from his mouth; for wha kens what trouble that might bring me into! *Ne inducas in tentationem. Vade retro, Sathanas! Amen.*

In obedience to the royal mandate, George Heriot hurried the abashed petitioner out of the presence and out of the palace; and, when they were in the palace-yard, the citizen, remembering with some resentment the airs of equality which Richie had assumed towards him in the commencement of the scene which had just taken place, could not forbear to retaliate, by congratulating him with an ironical smile on his favour at court, and his improved grace in presenting a supplication.

'Never fash your beard about that, Master George Heriot,' said Richie, totally undismayed; 'but tell me when and where I am to sifflicate you for eight hundred pounds sterling, for which these jewels stood engaged?'

'The instant that you bring with you the real owner of the money,' replied Heriot; 'whom it is important that I should see on more accounts than one.'

'Then will I back to his Majesty,' said Richie Moniplies, stoutly, 'and get either the money or the pledge back again. I am fully commissionate to act in that matter.'

'It may be so, Richie,' said the citizen, 'and perchance it may *not* be so neither, for your tales are not all gospel; and, therefore, be assured I will see that it *is* so ere I pay you that large sum of money. I shall give you an acknowledgment for it, and I will keep it prestable at a moment's warning. But, my good Richard Moniplies of Castle Collop, near the West Port of Edinburgh, in the meantime I am bound to return to his Majesty on matters of weight.' So speaking, and mounting the stair to re-enter the palace, he added, by way of summing up the whole — 'George Heriot is over old a cock to be caught with chaff.'

Richie stood petrified when he beheld him re-enter the palace, and found himself, as he supposed, left in the lurch. 'Now, plague on ye,' he muttered, 'for a cunning auld skin-flint! that, because ye are an honest man yoursell, forsooth, must needs deal with all the world as if they were knaves. But deil be in me if ye beat me yet! Gude guide us! yonder comes Laurie Linklater next, and he will be on me about the sifflication. I winna stand him, by St. Andrew!'

So saying, and changing the haughty stride with which he had that morning entered the precincts of the palace into a skulking shamble, he retreated for his wherry, which was in attendance, with speed which, to use the approved phrase on such occasions, greatly resembled a flight.

CHAPTER XXXII

Benedict. This looks not like a nuptial.

Much Ado about Nothing.

MASTER GEORGE HERIOT had no sooner returned to the King's apartment than James inquired of Maxwell if the Earl of Huntinglen was in attendance, and, receiving an answer in the affirmative, desired that he should be admitted. The old Scottish lord having made his reverence in the usual manner, the King extended his hand to be kissed, and then began to address him in a tone of great sympathy.

'We told your lordship in our secret epistle of this morning, written with our ain hand, in testimony we have neither pretermitted nor forgotten your faithful service, that we had that to communicate to you that would require both patience and fortitude to endure, and therefore exhorted you to peruse some of the most pithy passages of Seneca, and of Boethius, *De Consolatione*, that the back may be, as we say, fitted for the burden. This we commend to you from our ain experience.

Non ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco,

sayeth Dido, and I might say in my own person, *non ignarus*; but to change the gender would affect the prosody, whereof our southern subjects are tenacious. So, my lord of Huntinglen, I trust you have acted by our advice, and studied patience before ye need it. *Venienti occurrere morbo*: mix the medication when the disease is coming on.'

'May it please your Majesty,' answered Lord Huntinglen, 'I am more of an old soldier than a scholar; and if my own rough nature will not bear me out in any calamity, I hope I shall have grace to try a text of Scripture to boot.'

'Ay, man, are you there with your bears?' said the King; 'the Bible, man (touching his cap), is indeed *principium et fons*; but it is pity your lordship cannot peruse it in the original. For although we did ourselves promote that work of

translation — since ye may read, at the beginning of every Bible, that, when some palpable clouds of darkness were thought like to have overshadowed the land, after the setting of that bright occidental star, Queen Elizabeth; yet our appearance, like that of the sun in his strength, instantly dispelled these surmised mists — I say that, although, as therein mentioned, we countenanced the preaching of the Gospel, and especially the translation of the Scriptures out of the original sacred tongues; yet, nevertheless, we ourselves confess to have found a comfort in consulting them in the original Hebrew whilk we do not perceive even in the Latin version of the Septuagint, much less in the English traduction.’

‘Please your Majesty,’ said Lord Huntinglen, ‘if your Majesty delays communicating the bad news with which your honoured letter threatens me until I am capable to read Hebrew like your Majesty, I fear I shall die in ignorance of the misfortune which hath befallen, or is about to befall, my house.’

‘You will learn it but too soon, my lord,’ replied the King. ‘I grieve to say it, but your son Dalgarno, whom I thought a very saint, as he was so much with Steenie and Baby Charles, hath turned out a very villain.’

‘Villain!’ repeated Lord Huntinglen; and though he instantly checked himself, and added, ‘but it is your Majesty speaks the word,’ the effect of his first tone made the King step back as if he had received a blow. He also recovered himself again, and said in the pettish way which usually indicated his displeasure — ‘Yes, my lord, it was we that said it. *Non surdo canis*: we are not deaf, we pray you not to raise your voice in speech with us. There is the bonny memorial; read and judge for yourself.’

The King then thrust into the old nobleman’s hand a paper, containing the story of the Lady Hermione, with the evidence by which it was supported, detailed so briefly and clearly that the infamy of Lord Dalgarno, the lover by whom she had been so shamefully deceived, seemed undeniable.

But a father yields not up so easily the cause of his son. ‘May it please your Majesty,’ he said, ‘why was this tale not sooner told? This woman hath been here for years; wherefore was the claim on my son not made the instant she touched English ground?’

‘Tell him how that came about, Geordie,’ said the King, addressing Heriot.

'I grieve to distress my Lord Huntinglen,' said Heriot; 'but I must speak the truth. For a long time the Lady Hermione could not brook the idea of making her situation public; and when her mind became changed in that particular, it was necessary to recover the evidence of the false marriage, and letters and papers connected with it, which, when she came to Paris, and just before I saw her, she had deposited with a correspondent of her father in that city. He became afterwards bankrupt, and in consequence of that misfortune the lady's papers passed into other hands, and it is only a few days since I traced and recovered them. Without these documents of evidence, it would have been imprudent for her to have preferred her complaint, favoured as Lord Dalgarno is by powerful friends.'

'Ye are saucy to say sae,' said the King; 'I ken what ye mean weel enough: ye think Steenie wad hae putten the weight of his foot into the scales of justice, and garr'd them whomle the bucket; ye forget, Geordie, wha it is whose hand uphaulds them. And ye do poor Steenie the mair wrang, for he confessed at ance before us and our privy council that Dalgarno would have put the quean aff on him, the puir simple bairn, making him trow that she was a light o' love; in whilk mind he remained assured even when he parted from her, albeit Steenie might hae weel thought ane of thae cattle wadna hae resisted the like of him.'

'The Lady Hermione,' said George Heriot, 'has always done the utmost justice to the conduct of the Duke, who, although strongly possessed with prejudice against her character, yet scorned to avail himself of her distress, and on the contrary supplied her with the means of extricating herself from her difficulties.'

'It was e'en like himsell — blessings on his bonny face!' said the King; 'and I believed this lady's tale the mair readily, my Lord Huntinglen, that she spake nae ill of Steenie; and to make a lang tale short, my lord, it is the opinion of our council and ourself, as weel as of Baby Charles and Steenie, that your son maun amend his wrong by wedding this lady, or undergo such disgrace and discountenance as we can bestow.'

The person to whom he spoke was incapable of answering him. He stood before the King motionless, and glaring with eyes of which even the lids seemed immovable, as if suddenly converted into an ancient statue of the times of chivalry, so instantly had his hard features and strong limbs been arrested

into rigidity by the blow he had received. And in a second afterwards, like the same statue when the lightning breaks upon it, he sunk at once to the ground with a heavy groan.

The King was in the utmost alarm, called upon Heriot and Maxwell for help, and, presence of mind not being his *forte*, ran to and fro in his cabinet, exclaiming — ‘My ancient and beloved servant — who saved our anointed self! *Vae atque dolor!* My Lord of Huntinglen, look up — look up, man, and your son may marry the Queen of Sheba if he will.’

By this time Maxwell and Heriot had raised the old nobleman and placed him on a chair; while the King, observing that he began to recover himself, continued his consolations more methodically.

‘Haud up your head — haud up your head, and listen to your ain kind native prince. If there is shame, man, it comesna empty-handed: there is siller to gild it — a gude tocher, and no that bad a pedigree; if she has been a loon, it was your son made her sae, and he can make her an honest woman again.’

These suggestions, however reasonable in the common case, gave no comfort to Lord Huntinglen, if indeed he fully comprehended them; but the blubbing of his good-natured old master, which began to accompany and interrupt his royal speech, produced more rapid effect. The large tear gushed reluctantly from his eye, as he kissed the withered hands, which the King, weeping with less dignity and restraint, abandoned to him, first alternately and then both together, until the feelings of the man getting entirely the better of the sovereign’s sense of dignity, he grasped and shook Lord Huntinglen’s hands with the sympathy of an equal and a familiar friend.

‘*Compone lachrymas,*’ said the monarch — ‘be patient, man — be patient. The council, and Baby Charles, and Steenie may a’ gang to the deevil; he shall not marry her since it moves you so deeply.’

‘He SHALL marry her, by God!’ answered the earl, drawing himself up, dashing the tear from his eyes, and endeavouring to recover his composure. ‘I pray your Majesty’s pardon, but he shall marry her, with her dishonour for her dowry, were she the veriest courtesan in all Spain. If he gave his word, he shall make his word good, were it to the meanest creature that haunts the streets; he shall do it, or my own dagger shall take the life that I gave him. If he could stoop to use so base a fraud, though to deceive infamy, let him wed infamy.’

'No—no!' the monarch continued to insinuate, 'things are not so bad as that: Steenie himself never thought of her being a street-walker, even when he thought the worst of her.'

'If it can at all console my Lord of Huntinglen,' said the citizen, 'I can assure him of this lady's good birth and most fair and unspotted fame.'

'I am sorry for it,' said Lord Huntinglen; then interrupting himself, he said—'Heaven forgive me for being ungrateful for such comfort! but I am wellnigh sorry she should be as you represent her—so much better than the villain deserves. To be condemned to wed beauty and innocence and honest birth——'

'Ay, and wealth, my lord—wealth,' insinuated the King—'is a better sentence than his perfidy has deserved.'

'It is long,' said the embittered father, 'since I saw he was selfish and hard-hearted; but to be a perjured liar—I never dreaded that such a blot would have fallen on my race! I will never look on him again.'

'Hoot ay, my lord—hoot ay,' said the King; 'ye maun tak him to task roundly. I grant you should speak more in the vein of Demea than Mitio, *vi nempe et via pervulgata patrum*; but as for not seeing him again, and he your only son, that is altogether out of reason. I tell ye, man—but I would not for a boddle that Baby Charles heard me—that *he* might gie the glaiks to half the lasses of Lonnun, ere I could find in my heart to speak such harsh words as you have said of this deil of a Dalgarno of yours.'

'May it please your Majesty to permit me to retire,' said Lord Huntinglen; 'and dispose of the case according to your own royal sense of justice, for I desire no favour for him.'

'Aweel, my lord, so be it; and if your lordship can think,' added the monarch, 'of anything in our power which might comfort you——'

'Your Majesty's gracious sympathy,' said Lord Huntinglen, 'has already comforted me as far as earth can; the rest must be from the King of kings.'

'To Him I commend you, my auld and faithful servant,' said James with emotion, as the earl withdrew from his presence. The King remained fixed in thought for some time, and then said to Heriot, 'Jingling Geordie, ye ken all the privy doings of our court, and have dune so these thirty years, though, like a wise man, ye hear, and see, and say nothing. Now, there is a thing I fain wad ken, in the way of philosophical inquiry: Did you ever hear of the umquhile Lady Huntinglen, the

departed countess of this noble earl, ganging a wee bit glee in her walk through the world; I mean in the way of slipping a foot, casting a leglin-girth¹ or the like, ye understand me?

'On my word as an honest man,' said George Heriot, somewhat surprised at the question, 'I never heard her wronged by the slightest breath of suspicion. She was a worthy lady, very circumspect in her walk, and lived in great concord with her husband, save that the good countess was something of a Puritan, and kept more company with ministers than was altogether agreeable to Lord Huntinglen, who is, as your Majesty well knows, a man of the old rough world, that will drink and swear.'

'O Geordie!' exclaimed the King, 'these are auld-warlike frailties, of whilk we dare not pronounce even ourselves absolutely free. But the world grows worse from day to day, Geordie. The juveniles of this age may weel say with the poet —

*Ætas parentum, pejor avis, tulit
Nos nequiores —*

This Dalgarno does not drink so much or swear so much as his father; but he wenches, Geordie, and he breaks his word and oath baith. As to what you say of the leddy and the ministers, we are a' fallible creatures, Geordie, priests and kings, as weel as others; and wha kens but what that may account for the difference between this Dalgarno and his father? The earl is the vera soul of honour, and cares nae mair for the world's gear than a noble hound for the quest of a foulman, but as for his son, he was like to brazen us a' out — ourselv Steenie, Baby Charles, and our council — till he heard of the tocher, and then, by my kingly crown, he lap like a cock at grossart! These are discrepancies betwixt parent and son not to be accounted for naturally, according to Baptista Porta, Michael Scott, *De secretis*, and others. Ah, Jingling Geordie, your clouting the caldron, and jingling on pots, pans, and veshels of all manner of metal, hadna jingled a' your grammar out of your head, I could have touched on that matter to you at mair length.'

Heriot was too plain-spoken to express much concern for the loss of his grammar learning on this occasion; but after modestly hinting that he had seen many men who could not fill their father's bonnet, though no one had been suspected

¹ See Note 41.

wearing their father's night-cap, he inquired 'whether Lord Dalgarno had consented to do the Lady Hermione justice.'

'Troth, man, I have small doubt that he will,' quoth the King. 'I gave him the schedule of her worldly substance, which you delivered to us in the council, and we allowed him half an hour to chew the cud upon that. It is rare reading for bringing him to reason. I left Baby Charles and Steenie laying his duty before him; and if he can resist doing what *they* desire him — why, I wish he would teach *me* the gate of it. O Geordie — Jingling Geordie, it was grand to hear Baby Charles laying down the guilt of dissimulation, and Steenie lecturing on the turpitude of incontinence!'

'I am afraid,' said George Heriot, more hastily than prudently, 'I might have thought of the old proverb of Satan reproving sin.'

'Deil hae our saul, neighbour,' said the King, reddening, 'but ye are not blate! I gie ye license to speak freely, and, by our saul, ye do not let the privilege become lost *non utendo*; it will suffer no negative prescription in your hands. Is it fit, think ye, that Baby Charles should let his thoughts be publicly seen? No — no, princes' thoughts are *arcana imperii*. *Qui nescit dissimulare nescit regnare*. Every liege subject is bound to speak the whole truth to the king, but there is nae reciprocity of obligation. And for Steenie having been whiles a dike-louper at a time, is it for you, who are his goldsmith, and to whom, I doubt, he awes an uncomeatable sum, to cast that up to him?'

Heriot did not feel himself called on to play the part of Zeno, and sacrifice himself for upholding the cause of moral truth; he did not desert it, however, by disavowing his words, but simply expressed sorrow for having offended his Majesty, with which the placable king was sufficiently satisfied.

'And now, Geordie, man,' quoth he, 'we will to this culprit, and hear what he has to say for himself, for I will see the job cleared this blessed day. Ye maun come wi' me, for your evidence may be wanted.'

The King led the way, accordingly, into a larger apartment, where the Prince, the Duke of Buckingham, and one or two privy councillors were seated at a table, before which stood Lord Dalgarno, in an attitude of as much elegant ease and indifference as could be expressed, considering the stiff dress and manners of the times.

All rose and bowed reverently, while the King, to use a

north-country word expressive of his mode of locomotion, 'toddled' to his chair or throne, making a sign to Heriot to stand behind him.

'We hope,' said his Majesty, 'that Lord Dalgarno stands prepared to do justice to this unfortunate lady and to his own character and honour?'

'May I humbly inquire the penalty,' said Lord Dalgarno, 'in case I should unhappily find compliance with your Majesty's demands impossible?'

'Banishment frae our court, my lord,' said the King — 'frae our court and our countenance.'

'Unhappy exile that I may be!' said Lord Dalgarno, in a tone of subdued irony, 'I will at least carry your Majesty's picture with me, for I shall never see such another king.'

'And banishment, my lord,' said the Prince, sternly, 'from these our dominions.'

'That must be by form of law, please your Royal Highness,' said Dalgarno, with an affectation of deep respect; 'and I have not heard that there is a statute compelling us, under such penalty, to marry every woman we may play the fool with. Perhaps his Grace of Buckingham can tell me.'

'You are a villain, Dalgarno,' said the haughty and vehement favourite.

'Fie, my lord — fie! to a prisoner, and in presence of your royal and paternal gossip!' said Lord Dalgarno. 'But I will cut this deliberation short. I have looked over this schedule of the goods and effects of Erminia Pauletti, daughter of the late noble — yes, he is called the noble, or I read wrong — Giovanni Pauletti, of the house of Sansovino, in Genoa, and of the no less noble Lady Maud Olifaunt, of the house of Glenvarloch. Well, I declare that I was pre-contracted in Spain to this noble lady, and there has passed betwixt us some certain *prælibatio matrimonii*; and now, what more does this grave assembly require of me?'

'That you should repair the gross and infamous wrong you have done the lady by marrying her within this hour,' said the Prince.

'Oh, may it please your Royal Highness,' answered Dalgarno, 'I have a trifling relationship with an old earl, who calls himself my father, who may claim some vote in the matter. Alas! every son is not blessed with an obedient parent!' He hazarded a slight glance towards the throne, to give meaning to his last words.

unembarrassed in his gait and manner as if in reality a happy bridegroom.

They reached the chapel by a private entrance, which communicated from the royal apartment. The Bishop of Winchester, in his pontifical dress, stood beside the altar; on the other side, supported by Monna Paula, the colourless, faded, half-lifeless form of the Lady Hermione, or Erminia, Pauletti. Lord Dalgarno bowed profoundly to her, and the Prince, observing the horror with which she regarded him, walked up and said to her, with much dignity, 'Madam, ere you put yourself under the authority of this man, let me inform you, he hath in the fullest degree vindicated your honour, so far as concerns your former intercourse. It is for you to consider whether you will put your fortune and happiness into the hands of one who has shown himself unworthy of all trust.'

The lady, with much difficulty, found words to make reply. 'I owe to his Majesty's goodness,' she said, 'the care of providing me some reservation out of my own fortune for my decent sustenance. The rest cannot be better disposed than in buying back the fair fame of which I am deprived, and the liberty of ending my life in peace and seclusion.'

'The contract has been drawn up,' said the King, 'under our own eye, specially discharging the *potestas maritalis*, and agreeing they shall live separate. So buckle them, my lord bishop, as fast as you can, that they may sunder again the sooner.'

The bishop accordingly opened his book and commenced the marriage ceremony, under circumstances so novel and so inauspicious. The responses of the bride were only expressed by inclinations of the head and body; while those of the bridegroom were spoken boldly and distinctly, with a tone resembling levity, if not scorn. When it was concluded, Lord Dalgarno advanced as if to salute the bride, but seeing that she drew back in fear and abhorrence, he contented himself with making her a low bow. He then drew up his form to its height, and stretched himself as if examining the power of his limbs, but elegantly, and without any forcible change of attitude. 'I could caper yet,' he said, 'though I am in fetters; but they are of gold, and lightly worn. Well, I see all eyes look cold on me, and it is time I should withdraw. The sun shines elsewhere than in England! But first I must ask how this fair Lady Dalgarno is to be bestowed. Methinks it is but decent I should know. Is she to be sent to the haram of my lord duke? Or is this worthy citizen, as before ——'

'Hold thy base ribald tongue!' said his father, Lord Huntinglen, who had kept in the background during the ceremony, and now stepping suddenly forward, caught the lady by the arm, and confronted her unworthy husband. 'The Lady Dalgarno,' he continued, 'shall remain as a widow in my house. A widow I esteem her, as much as if the grave had closed over her dishonoured husband.'

Lord Dalgarno exhibited momentary symptoms of extreme confusion, and said, in a submissive tone, 'If you, my lord, can wish me dead, I cannot, though your heir, return the compliment. Few of the first-born of Israel,' he added, recovering himself from the single touch of emotion he had displayed, 'can say so much with truth. But I will convince you ere I go that I am a true descendant of a house famed for its memory of injuries.'

'I marvel your Majesty will listen to him longer,' said Prince Charles. 'Methinks we have heard enough of his daring insolence.'

But James, who took the interest of a true gossip in such a scene as was now passing, could not bear to cut the controversy short, but imposed silence on his son with, 'Whisht, Baby Charles — there is a good bairn, whisht! I want to hear what the frontless loon can say.'

'Only, sir,' said Dalgarno, 'that but for one single line in this schedule, all else that it contains could not have bribed me to take that woman's hand into mine.'

'That line maun have been the *summa totalis*,' said the King.

'Not so, sire,' replied Dalgarno. 'The sum total might indeed have been an object for consideration even to a Scottish king, at no very distant period; but it would have had little charms for me, save that I see here an entry which gives me the power of vengeance over the family of Glenvarloch; and learn from it that yonder pale bride, when she put the wedding-torch into my hand, gave me the power of burning her mother's house to ashes!'

'How is that?' said the King. 'What is he speaking about, Jingling Geordie?'

'This friendly citizen, my liege,' said Lord Dalgarno, 'hath expended a sum belonging to my lady, and now, I thank Heaven, to me, in acquiring a certain mortgage, or wadset, over the estate of Glenvarloch, which, if it be not redeemed before to-morrow at noon, will put me in possession of the fair demesnes of those who once called themselves our house's rivals.'

'Can this be true?' said the King.

'It is even but too true, please your Majesty,' answered the citizen. 'The Lady Hermione having advanced the money for the original creditor, I was obliged in honour and honesty, to take the rights to her; and, doubtless, they pass to her husband.'

'But the warrant, man,' said the King — 'the warrant on our exchequer. Couldna that supply the lad wi' the means of redemption?'

'Unhappily, my liege, he has lost it, or disposed of it. It is not to be found. He is the most unlucky youth!'

'This is a proper spot of work!' said the King, beginning to amble about and play with the points of his doublet and hose, in expression of dismay. 'We cannot aid him without paying our debts twice over, and we have, in the present state of our exchequer, scarce the means of paying them once.'

'You have told me news,' said Lord Dalgarno, 'but I will take no advantage.'

'Do not,' said his father. 'Be a bold villain, since thou must be one, and seek revenge with arms, and not with the usurer's weapons.'

'Pardon me, my lord,' said Lord Dalgarno. 'Pen and ink are now my surest means of vengeance; and more land is won by the lawyer with the ram-skin than by the Andrea Ferrara with his sheep's-head handle. But, as I said before, I will take no advantage. I will await in town to-morrow, near Covent Garden; if any one will pay the redemption-money to my scrivener, with whom the deeds lie, the better for Lord Glenvarloch; if not, I will go forward on the next day, and travel with all despatch to the North, to take possession.'

'Take a father's malison with you, unhappy wretch!' said Lord Huntinglen.

'And a King's, who is *pater patriæ*,' said James.

'I trust to hear both lightly,' said Lord Dalgarno, and bowing around him, he withdrew; while all present, oppressed, and, as it were, overawed, by his determined effrontery, found they could draw breath more freely when he at length relieved them of his society. Lord Huntinglen, applying himself to comfort his new daughter-in-law, withdrew with her also; and the King, with his privy council, whom he had not dismissed, again returned to his council-chamber, though the hour was unusually late. Heriot's attendance was still commanded, but for what reason was not explained to him.

CHAPTER XXXIII

I'll play the eavesdropper.

Richard III. Act V. Scene 3.

JAMES had no sooner resumed his seat at the council-board than he began to hitch in his chair, cough, use his handkerchief, and make other intimations that he meditated a long speech. The council composed themselves to the beseeeming degree of attention. Charles, as strict in his notions of decorum as his father was indifferent to it, fixed himself in an attitude of rigid and respectful attention, while the haughty favourite, conscious of his power over both father and son, stretched himself more easily on his seat, and, in assuming an appearance of listening, seemed to pay a debt to ceremonial rather than to duty.

'I doubt not, my lords,' said the monarch, 'that some of you may be thinking the hour of refection is past, and that it is time to ask with the slave in the comedy — *Quid de symbolo?* Nevertheless, to do justice and exercise judgment is our meat and drink; and now we are to pray your wisdom to consider the case of this unhappy youth, Lord Glenvarloch, and see whether, consistently with our honour, anything can be done in his favour.'

'I am surprised at your Majesty's wisdom making the inquiry,' said the duke; 'it is plain this Dalgarno hath proved one of the most insolent villains on earth, and it must therefore be clear that, if Lord Glenvarloch had run him through the body, there would but have been out of the world a knave who had lived in it too long. I think Lord Glenvarloch hath had much wrong; and I regret that, by the persuasions of this false fellow, I have myself had some hand in it.'

'Ye speak like a child, Steenie — I mean my Lord of Buckingham,' answered the King, 'and as one that does not understand the logic of the schools; for an action may be inconsequential or even meritorious *quoad hominem*, that is, as touching him upon whom it is acted; and yet most criminal *quoad locum*,

or considering the place *wherein* it is done, as a man may lawfully dance Chrighy Beardie or any other dance in a tavern, but not *inter parietes ecclesiæ*; so that, though it may have been a good deed to have sticked Lord Dalgarno, being such as he has shown himself, anywhere else, yet it fell under the plain statute when violence was offered within the verge of the court. For, let me tell you, my lords, the statute against striking would be of small use in our court, if it could be eluded by justifying the person stricken to be a knave. It is much to be lamented that I ken nae court in Christendom where knaves are not to be found; and if men are to break the peace under pretence of beating them, why, it will rain Jeddart staves¹ in our very ante-chamber.'

'What your Majesty says,' replied Prince Charles, 'is marked with your usual wisdom: the precincts of palaces must be sacred as well as the persons of kings, which are respected even in the most barbarous nations, as being one step only beneath their divinities. But your Majesty's will can control the severity of this and every other law, and it is in your power, on consideration of his case, to grant this rash young man a free pardon.'

'*Rem acu tetigisti, Carole, mi puerule,*' answered the King; 'and know, my lords, that we have, by a shrewd device and gift of our own, already sounded the very depth of this Lord Glenvarloch's disposition. I trow there be among you some that remember my handling in the curious case of my Lady Lake,² and how I trimmed them about the story of hearkening behind the arras. Now this put me to cogitation, and I remembered me of having read that Dionysius, King of Syracuse, whom historians call *τύραννος*, which signifieth not in the Greek tongue, as in ours, a truculent usurper, but a royal king who governs, it may be, something more strictly than we and other lawful monarchs, whom the ancients termed *βασιλεῖς*. Now this Dionysius of Syracuse caused cunning workmen to build for himself a "lugg." D'ye ken what that is, my lord bishop?'

'A cathedral, I presume to guess,' answered the bishop.

'What the deil, man — I crave your lordship's pardon for swearing — but it was no cathedral, only a lurking-place called the king's "lugg," or "ear," where he could sit undescried and hear the converse of his prisoners. Now, sirs, in imitation of

¹ The old-fashioned weapon called the Jeddart staff was a species of battle-axe. Of a very great tempest. It is said, in the south of Scotland, that it rains Jeddart staves, as in England the common people talk of its raining cats and dogs.

² See Note 42.

this Dionysius, whom I took for my pattern, the rather that he was a great linguist and grammarian, and taught a school with good applause after his abdication — either he or his successor of the same name, it matters not whilk — I have caused them to make a “lugg” up at the state prison of the Tower yonder — more like a pulpit than a cathedral, my lord bishop — and communicating with the arras behind the lieutenant’s chamber, where we may sit and privily hear the discourse of such prisoners as are pent up there for state offences, and so creep into the very secrets of our enemies.’

The Prince cast a glance towards the Duke, expressive of great vexation and disgust. Buckingham shrugged his shoulders, but the motion was so slight as to be almost imperceptible.

‘Weel, my lords, ye ken the fray at the hunting this morning — I shall not get out of the trembling exies until I have a sound night’s sleep — just after that, they bring ye in a pretty page that had been found in the Park. We were warned against examining him ourselves by the anxious care of those around us; nevertheless, holding our life ever at the service of these kingdoms, we commanded all to avoid the room, the rather that we suspected this boy to be a girl. What think ye, my lords? Few of you would have thought I had a hawk’s eye for sic gear; but we thank God that, though we are old, we know so much of such toys as may beseem a man of decent gravity. Weel, my lords, we questioned this maiden in male attire ourselves, and I profess it was a very pretty interrogatory, and well followed. For, though she at first professed that she assumed this disguise in order to countenance the woman who should present us with the Lady Hermione’s petition, for whom she professed entire affection; yet when we, suspecting *anguis in herba*, did put her to the very question, she was compelled to own a virtuous attachment for Glenvarlochides, in such a pretty passion of shame and fear, that we had much ado to keep our own eyes from keeping company with hers in weeping. Also, she laid before us the false practices of this Dalgarno towards Glenvarlochides, inveigling him into houses of ill resort, and giving him evil counsel under pretext of sincere friendship, whereby the inexperienced lad was led to do what was prejudicial to himself and offensive to us. But, however prettily she told her tale, we determined not altogether to trust to her narration, but rather to try the experiment whilk we had devised for such occasions. And having ourselves speedily passed from Greenwich to the Tower, we constituted ourselves eavesdropper,

as it is called, to observe what should pass between Glenvarlochides and this page, whom we caused to be admitted to his apartment, well judging that if they were of counsel together to deceive us, it could not be but something of it would spunk out. And what think ye we saw, my lords? Naething for you to sniggle and laugh at, Steenie; for I question if you could have played the temperate and Christian-like part of this poor lad Glenvarloch. He might be a father of the church in comparison of you, man. And then, to try his patience yet farther, we loosed on him a courtier and a citizen, that is, Sir Mungo Malagrowth and our servant George Heriot here, wha dang the poor lad about, and didna greatly spare our royal selves. You mind, Geordie, what ye said about the wives and concubines? but I forgie ye, man — nae need of kneeling, I forgie ye — the readier that it regards a certain particular whilk, as it added not much to Solomon's credit, the lack of it cannot be said to impinge on ours. Aweel, my lords, for all temptation of sore distress and evil ensample, this poor lad never loosed his tongue on us to say one unbecoming word; which inclines us the rather, acting always by your wise advice, to treat this affair of the Park as a thing done in the heat of blood, and under strong provocation, and therefore to confer our free pardon on Lord Glenvarloch.'

'I am happy your gracious Majesty,' said the Duke of Buckingham, 'has arrived at that conclusion, though I could never have guessed at the road by which you attained it.'

'I trust,' said Prince Charles, 'that it is not a path which your Majesty will think it consistent with your high dignity to tread frequently.'

'Never while I live again, Baby Charles, that I give you my royal word on. They say that hearkeners hear ill tales of themselves; by my saul, my very ears are tingling wi' that auld sorrow Sir Mungo's sarcasms. He called us close-fisted, Steenie; I am sure you can contradict that. But it is mere envy in the auld mutilated sinner, because he himself has neither a noble to hold in his loof nor fingers to close on it if he had.' Here the King lost recollection of Sir Mungo's irreverence in chuckling over his own wit, and only farther alluded to it by saying — 'We must give the auld maunderer *bos in linguam* — something to stop his mouth, or he will rail at us from Dan to Beersheba. And now, my lords, let our warrant of mercy to Lord Glenvarloch be presently expedited, and he put to his freedom; and as his estate is likely to go so sleeveless a gate,

we will consider what means of favour we can show him. My lords, I wish you an appetite to an early supper ; for our labours have approached that term. Baby Charles and Steenie, you will remain till our couchee. My lord bishop, you will be pleased to stay to bless our meat. Geordie Heriot, a word with you apart.'

His Majesty then drew the citizen into a corner, while the councillors, those excepted who had been commanded to remain, made their obeisance and withdrew. 'Geordie,' said the King, 'my good and trusty servant (here he busied his fingers much with the points and ribbons of his dress), ye see that we have granted, from our own natural sense of right and justice, that which yon long-backed fallow — Moniplies, I think they ca' him — proffered to purchase from us with a mighty bribe ; whilk we refused, as being a crowned king, who wad neither sell our justice nor our mercy for pecuniar consideration. Now, what think ye should be the upshot of this ?'

'My Lord Glenvarloch's freedom, and his restoration to your Majesty's favour,' said Heriot.

'I ken that,' said the King, peevishly. 'Ye are very dull to-day. I mean, what do you think this fallow Moniplies should think about the matter ?'

'Surely that your Majesty is a most good and gracious sovereign,' answered Heriot.

'We had need to be gude and gracious baith,' said the King, still more pettishly, 'that have idiots about us that cannot understand what we mint at, unless we speak it out in braid Lowlands. See this chield Moniplies, sir, and tell him what we have done for Lord Glenvarloch, in whom he takes such part, out of our own gracious motion, though we refused to do it on ony proffer of private advantage. Now, you may put it till him, as if of your own mind, whether it will be a gracious or a dutiful part in him to press us for present payment of the two or three hundred miserable pounds for whilk we were obliged to opignorate our jewels ? Indeed, mony men may think ye wad do the part of a good citizen if you took it on yourself to refuse him payment, seeing he hath had what he professed to esteem full satisfaction, and considering, moreover, that it is evident he hath no pressing need of money, whereof we have much necessity.'

George Heriot sighed internally. 'Oh, my master,' thought he — 'my dear master, is it then fated you are never to indulge any kingly or noble sentiment without its being sullied by some afterthought of interested selfishness !'

The King troubled himself not about what he thought, but, taking him by the collar, said, 'Ye ken my meaning now, Jingler; awa' wi' ye. You are a wise man; manage it your ain gate, but forget not our present straits.'

The citizen made his obeisance and withdrew.

'And now, bairns,' said the King, 'what do you look upon each other for; and what have you got to ask of your dear dad and gossip?'

'Only,' said the Prince, 'that it would please your Majesty to command the lurking-place at the prison to be presently built up: the groans of a captive should not be brought in evidence against him.'

'What! build up my lugg, Baby Charles? And yet, better deaf than hear ill tales of oneself. So let them build it up, hard and fast, without delay, the rather that my back is sair with sitting in it for a whole hour. And now let us see what the cooks have been doing for us, bonny bairns.'

CHAPTER XXXIV

To this brave man the knight repairs
For counsel in his law affairs ;
And found him mounted in his pew,
With books and money placed for show,
Like nest eggs to make clients lay,
And for his false opinion pay.

Hudibras.

OUR readers may recollect a certain smooth-tongued, lank-haired, buckrum-suited, Scottish scrivener, who, in an early part of this history, appeared in the character of a *protégé* of George Heriot. It is to his house we are about to remove ; but times have changed with him. The petty booth hath become a chamber of importance ; the buckram suit is changed into black velvet ; and although the wearer retains his Puritanical humility and politeness to clients of consequence, he can now look others broad in the face, and treat them with a full allowance of superior opulence, and the insolence arising from it. It was but a short period that had achieved these alterations, nor was the party himself as yet entirely accustomed to them, but the change was becoming less embarrassing to him with every day's practice. Among other acquisitions of wealth, you may see one of Davie Ramsay's best timepieces on the table, and his eye is frequently observing its revolutions, while a boy, whom he employs as a scribe, is occasionally sent out to compare its progress with the clock of St. Dunstan.

The scrivener himself seemed considerably agitated. He took from a strong-box a bundle of parchments, and read passages of them with great attention ; then began to soliloquise — 'There is no outlet which law can suggest — no back-door of evasion — none : if the lands of Glenvarloch are not redeemed before it rings noon, Lord Dalgarno has them a cheap pennyworth. Strange, that he should have been at last able to set his patron at defiance, and achieve for himself the fair estate, with the

prospect of which he so long flattered the powerful Buckingham. Might not Andrew Skurliewhitter nick him as neatly? He hath been my patron, true — not more than Buckingham was his; and he can be so no more, for he departs presently for Scotland. I am glad of it; I hate him, and I fear him. He knows too many of my secrets; I know too many of his. But, no — no — no — I need never attempt it, there are no means of over-reaching him. Well, Willie, what o'clock?

'Ele'en hours just chappit, sir.'

'Go to your desk without, child,' said the scrivener. 'What to do next? I shall lose the old earl's fair business, and, what is worse, his son's foul practise. Old Heriot looks too close into business to permit me more than the paltry and ordinary dues. The Whitefriars business was profitable, but it has become unsafe ever since — pah! what brought that in my head just now? I can hardly hold my pen; if men should see me in this way! Willie (calling aloud to the boy), a cup of distilled waters. Soh! now I could face the devil.'

He spoke the last words aloud, and close by the door of the apartment, which was suddenly opened by Richie Moniplies, followed by two gentlemen, and attended by two porters bearing money-bags. 'If ye can face the devil, Maister Skurliewhitter,' said Richie, 'ye will be the less likely to turn your back on a sack or twa o' siller, which I have ta'en the freedom to bring you. Sathanas and Mammon are near akin.' The porters, at the same time, ranged their load on the floor.

'I — I,' stammered the surprised scrivener — 'I cannot guess what you mean, sir.'

'Only that I have brought you the redemption-money on the part of Lord Glenvarloch, in discharge of a certain mortgage over his family inheritance. And here, in good time, comes Master Reginald Lowestoffe and another honourable gentleman of the Temple, to be witnesses to the transaction.'

'I — I incline to think,' said the scrivener, 'that the term is expired.'

'You will pardon us, Master Scrivener,' said Lowestoffe. 'You will not baffle us; it wants three-quarters of noon by every clock in the city.'

'I must have time, gentlemen,' said Andrew, 'to examine the gold by tale and weight.'

'Do so at your leisure, Master Scrivener,' replied Lowestoffe again. 'We have already seen the contents of each sack told and weighed, and we have put our seals on them. There they

stand in a row, twenty in number, each containing three hundred yellow-hammers ; we are witnesses to the lawful tender.'

'Gentlemen,' said the scrivener, 'this security now belongs to a mighty lord. I pray you, abate your haste, and let me send for Lord Dalgarno — or rather I will run for him myself.'

So saying, he took up his hat ; but Lowestoffe called out — 'Friend Moniplies, keep the door fast, an thou be'st a man ! he seeks but to put off the time. In plain terms, Andrew, you may send for the devil, if you will, who is the mightiest lord of my acquaintance, but from hence you stir not till you have answered our proposition, by rejecting or accepting the redemption-money fairly tendered ; there it lies — take it or leave it as you will. I have skill enough to know that the law is mightier than any lord in Britain : I have learned so much at the Temple, if I have learned nothing else. And see that you trifle not with it, lest it make your long ears an inch shorter, Master Skurliewhitter.'

'Nay, gentlemen, if you threaten me,' said the scrivener, 'I cannot resist compulsion.'

'No threats — no threats at all, my little Andrew,' said Lowestoffe : 'a little friendly advice only ; forget not, honest Andrew, I have seen you in Alsatia.'

Without answering a single word, the scrivener sat down and drew in proper form a full receipt for the money proffered.

'I take it on your report, Master Lowestoffe,' he said ; 'I hope you will remember I have insisted neither upon weight nor tale — I have been civil ; if there is deficiency I shall come to loss.'

'Fillip his nose with a gold-piece, Richie,' quoth the Templar. 'Take up the papers, and now wend we merrily to dine thou wot'st where.'

'If I might choose,' said Richie, 'it should not be at yonder roguish ordinary ; but as it is your pleasure, gentlemen, the treat shall be given wheresoever you will have it.'

'At the ordinary,' said the one Templar.

'At Beaujeu's,' said the other ; 'it is the only house in London for neat wines, nimble drawers, choice dishes, and —'

'And high charges,' quoth Richie Moniplies. 'But, as I said before, gentlemen, ye have a right to command me in this thing, having so frankly rendered me your service in this small matter of business, without other stipulation than that of a slight banquet.'

The latter part of this discourse passed in the street, where,

immediately afterwards, they met Lord Dalgarno. He appeared in haste, touched his hat slightly to Master Lowestoffe, who returned his reverence with the same negligence and walked slowly on with his companion, while Lord Dalgarno stopped Richie Moniplies with a commanding sign, which the instinct of education compelled Moniplies, though indignant, to obey.

'Whom do you now follow, sirrah?' demanded the noble.

'Whomsoever goeth before me, my lord,' answered Moniplies.

'No sauciness, you knave; I desire to know if you still serve Nigel Olifaunt?' said Dalgarno.

'I am friend to the noble Lord Glenvarloch,' answered Moniplies, with dignity.

'True,' replied Lord Dalgarno, 'that noble lord has sunk to seek friends among lackeys. Nevertheless — hark thee hither — nevertheless, if he be of the same mind as when we last met, thou mayest show him that, on to-morrow, at four afternoon, I shall pass northward by Enfield Chase. I will be slenderly attended, as I design to send my train through Barnet. It is my purpose to ride an easy pace through the forest, and to linger a while by Camlet Moat; he knows the place, and, if he be aught but an Alsatian bully, will think it fitter for some purposes than the Park. He is, I understand, at liberty, or shortly to be so. If he fail me at the place nominated, he must seek me in Scotland, where he will find me possessed of his father's estate and lands.'

'Humph!' muttered Richie, 'there go twa words to that bargain.' He even meditated a joke on the means which he was conscious he possessed of baffling Lord Dalgarno's expectations; but there was something of keen and dangerous excitement in the eyes of the young nobleman which prompted his discretion for once to rule his wit, and he only answered — 'God grant your lordship may well brook your new conquest — when you get it. I shall do your errand to my lord; whilk is to say,' he added internally, 'he shall never hear a word of it from Richie. I am not the lad to put him in such hazard.'

Lord Dalgarno looked at him sharply for a moment, as if to penetrate the meaning of the dry, ironical tone which, in spite of Richie's awe, mingled with his answer, and then waved his hand, in signal he should pass on. He himself walked slowly till the trio were out of sight, then turned back with hasty steps to the door of the scrivener, which he had passed in his progress, knocked, and was admitted.

Lord Dalgarno found the man of law with the money-bags still standing before him ; and it escaped not his penetrating glance that Skurliewhitter was disconcerted and alarmed at his approach.

‘How now, man,’ he said ; ‘what ! hast thou not a word of oily compliment to me on my happy marriage ? Not a word of most philosophical consolation on my disgrace at court ? Or has my mien, as a wittol and discarded favourite, the properties of the Gorgon’s head, the *turbatae Palladis arma*, as Majesty might say ?’

‘My lord, I am glad — my lord, I am sorry,’ answered the trembling scrivener, who, aware of the vivacity of Lord Dalgarno’s temper, dreaded the consequence of the communication he had to make to him.

‘Glad and sorry !’ answered Lord Dalgarno. ‘That is blowing hot and cold, with a witness. Hark ye, you picture of petty-larceny personified, if you are sorry I am a cuckold, remember I am only mine own, you knave : there is too little blood in her cheeks to have sent her astray elsewhere. Well, I will bear mine antler’d honours as I may — gold shall gild them ; and for my disgrace, revenge shall sweeten it. Ay, revenge ! and there strikes the happy hour.’

The hour of noon was accordingly heard to peal from St. Dunstan’s. ‘Well banged, brave hammers !’ said Lord Dalgarno, in triumph. ‘The estate and lands of Glenvarloch are crushed beneath these clanging blows. If my steel to-morrow prove but as true as your iron maces to-day, the poor landless lord will little miss what your peal hath cut him out from. The papers — the papers, thou varlet ! I am to-morrow northward ho ! At four, afternoon, I am bound to be at Camlet Moat, in the Enfield Chase. To-night, most of my retinue set forward. The papers ! Come, despatch.’

‘My lord, the — the papers of the Glenvarloch mortgage — I — I have them not.’

‘Have them not !’ echoed Lord Dalgarno. ‘Hast thou sent them to my lodging, thou varlet ? Did I not say I was coming hither ? What mean you by pointing to that money ? What villainy have you done for it ? It is too large to be come honestly by.’

‘Your lordship knows best,’ answered the scrivener, in great perturbation. ‘The gold is your own. It is — it is —’

‘Not the redemption-money of the Glenvarloch estate ?’ said Dalgarno. ‘Dare not say it is, or I will, upon the spot, divorce

your pettifogging soul from your carrion carcass !' So saying, he seized the scrivener by the collar and shook him so vehemently that he tore it from the cassock.

'My lord, I must call for help,' said the trembling caitiff, who felt at that moment all the bitterness of the mortal agony. 'It was the law's act, not mine. What could I do ?'

'Dost ask ? Why, thou snivelling dribblet of damnation, were all thy oaths, tricks, and lies spent ? or do you hold yourself too good to utter them in my service ? Thou shouldst have lied, cozened, outsworn truth itself, rather than stood betwixt me and my revenge ! But mark me,' he continued ; 'I know more of your pranks than would hang thee. A line from me to the Attorney-General, and thou art sped.'

'What would you have me to do, my lord ?' said the scrivener. 'All that art and law can accomplish, I will try.'

'Ah, are you converted ? Do so, or pity of your life !' said the lord ; 'and remember I never fail my word. Then keep that accursed gold,' he continued. 'Or, stay, I will not trust you ; send me this gold home presently to my lodging. I will still forward to Scotland, and it shall go hard but that I hold out Glenvarloch Castle against the owner, by means of the ammunition he has himself furnished. Thou art ready to serve me ?' The scrivener professed the most implicit obedience.

'Then remember, the hour was past ere payment was tendered ; and see thou hast witnesses of trusty memory to prove that point.'

'Tush, my lord, I will do more,' said Andrew, reviving : 'I will prove that Lord Glenvarloch's friends threatened, swaggered, and drew swords on me. Did your lordship think I was ungrateful enough to have suffered them to prejudice your lordship, save that they had bare swords at my throat ?'

'Enough said,' replied Dalgarno ; 'you are perfect. Mind that you continue so, as you would avoid my fury. I leave my page below ; get porters, and let them follow me instantly with the gold.'

So saying, Lord Dalgarno left the scrivener's habitation.

Skurliewhitter, having despatched his boy to get porters of trust for transporting the money, remained alone and in dismay, meditating by what means he could shake himself free of the vindictive and ferocious nobleman, who possessed at once a dangerous knowledge of his character and the power of exposing him where exposure would be ruin. He had indeed acquiesced in the plan, rapidly sketched, for obtaining posses-

sion of the ransomed estate, but his experience foresaw that this would be impossible ; while, on the other hand, he could not anticipate the various consequences of Lord Dalgarno's resentment without fears from which his sordid soul recoiled. To be in the power, and subject both to the humours and the extortions, of a spendthrift young lord, just when his industry had shaped out the means of fortune—it was the most cruel trick which fate could have played the incipient usurer.

While the scrivener was in this fit of anxious anticipation, one knocked at the door of the apartment, and, being desired to enter, appeared in the coarse riding-cloak of uncut Wiltshire cloth, fastened by a broad leather belt and brass buckle, which was then generally worn by graziers and countrymen. Skurliewhitter, believing he saw in his visitor a country client who might prove profitable, had opened his mouth to request him to be seated, when the stranger, throwing back his frieze hood which he had drawn over his face, showed the scrivener features well imprinted in his recollection, but which he never saw without a disposition to swoon.

‘Is it you?’ he said, faintly, as the stranger replaced the hood which concealed his features.

‘Who else should it be?’ said his visitor.

‘Thou son of parchment, got betwixt the ink-horn
And the stuff'd process-bag, that mayest call
The pen thy father, and the ink thy mother,
The wax thy brother, and the sand thy sister,
And the good pillory thy cousin allied—
Rise, and do reverence unto me, thy better!’

‘Not yet down to the country,’ said the scrivener, ‘after every warning? Do not think your grazier's cloak will bear you out, captain—no, nor your scraps of stage-plays.’

‘Why, what would you have me to do?’ said the captain. ‘Would you have me starve? If I am to fly, you must eke my wings with a few feathers. You can spare them, I think.’

‘You had means already: you have had ten pieces. What is become of them?’

‘Gone,’ answered Captain Colepepper—‘gone, no matter where; I had a mind to bite, and I was bitten, that's all. I think my hand shook at the thought of last night's work, for I trowled the doctors like a very baby.’

‘And you have lost all, then? Well, take this and be gone,’ said the scrivener.

'What, two poor smelts! Marry, plague of your bounty! But remember you are as deep in as I.'

'Not so, by Heaven!' answered the scrivener: 'I only thought of easing the old man of some papers and a trifle of his gold, and you took his life.'

'Were he living,' answered Colepepper, 'he would rather have lost it than his money. But that is not the question, Master Skurliewhitter. You undid the private bolts of the window when you visited him about some affairs on the day ere he died; so satisfy yourself that, if I am taken, I will not swing alone. Pity Jack Hemsfield is dead, it spoils the old catch —

'And three merry men, and three merry men,
And three merry men are we,
As ever did sing three parts in a string,
All under the triple tree.'

'For God's sake, speak lower,' said the scrivener; 'is this a place or time to make your midnight catches heard? But how much will serve your turn? I tell you, I am but ill provided.'

'You tell me a lie then,' said the bully — 'a most palpable and gross lie. How much, d'ye say, will serve my turn? Why, one of those bags will do for the present.'

'I swear to you that these bags of money are not at my disposal.'

'Not honestly perhaps,' said the captain, 'but that makes little difference betwixt us.'

'I swear to you,' continued the scrivener, 'they are in no way at my disposal: they have been delivered to me by tale; I am to pay them over to Lord Dalgarno, whose boy waits for them, and I could not skelder one piece out of them without risk of hue and cry.'

'Can you not put off the delivery?' said the bravo, his huge hand still fumbling with one of the bags, as if his fingers longed to close on it.

'Impossible,' said the scrivener, 'he sets forward to Scotland to-morrow.'

'Ay!' said the bully, after a moment's thought. 'Travels he the North road with such a charge?'

'He is well accompanied,' added the scrivener; 'but yet ——'

'But yet — but what?' said the bravo.

'Nay, I meant nothing,' said the scrivener.

'Thou didst — thou hadst the wind of some good thing,' replied Colepepper; 'I saw thee pause like a setting dog. Thou

wilt say as little, and make as sure a sign, as a well-bred spaniel.'

'All I meant to say, captain, was that his servants go by Barnet, and he himself, with his page, pass through Enfield Chase; and he spoke to me yesterday of riding a soft pace.'

'Aha! Comest thou to me there, my boy?'

'And of resting,' continued the scrivener — 'resting a space at Camlet Moat.'

'Why, this is better than cock-fighting!' said the captain.

'I see not how it can advantage you, captain,' said the scrivener. 'But, however, they cannot ride fast, for his page rides the sumpter-horse, which carries all that weight,' pointing to the money on the table. 'Lord Dalgarno looks sharp to the world's gear.'

'That horse will be obliged to those who may ease him of his burden,' said the bravo; 'and, egad, he may be met with. He hath still that page — that same Lutin — that goblin? Well, the boy hath set game for me ere now. I will be revenged, too, for I owe him a grudge for an old score at the ordinary. Let me see — Black Feltham and Dick Shakebag — we shall want a fourth. I love to make sure, and the booty will stand parting, besides what I can bucket them out of. Well, scrivener, lend me two pieces. Bravely done — nobly imparted! Give ye god-den.' And wrapping his disguise closer around him, away he went.

When he had left the room, the scrivener wrung his hands and exclaimed, 'More blood — more blood! I thought to have had done with it; but this time there was no fault with me — none — and then I shall have all the advantage. If this ruffian falls, there is truce with his tugs at my purse-strings; and if Lord Dalgarno dies — as is most likely, for, though as much afraid of cold steel as a debtor of a dun, this fellow is a deadly shot from behind a bush — then am I in a thousand ways safe — safe — safe.'

We willingly drop the curtain over him and his reflections.

CHAPTER XXXV

We are not worst at once ; the course of evil
Begins so slowly, and from such slight source,
An infant's hand might stem its breach with clay.
But let the stream get deeper, and philosophy —
Ay, and religion too — shall strive in vain
To turn the headlong torrent.

Old Play.

THE Templars had been regaled by our friend Richie Moniplies in a private chamber at Beaujeu's, where he might be considered as good company ; for he had exchanged his serving-man's cloak and jerkin for a grave yet handsome suit of clothes, in the fashion of the times, but such as might have befitted an older man than himself. He had positively declined presenting himself at the ordinary — a point to which his companions were very desirous to have brought him, for it will be easily believed that such wags as Lowestoffe and his companion were not indisposed to a little merriment at the expense of the raw and pedantic Scotsman, besides the chance of easing him of a few pieces, of which he appeared to have acquired considerable command. But not even a succession of measures of sparkling sack, in which the little brilliant atoms circulated like motes in the sun's rays, had the least effect on Richie's sense of decorum. He retained the gravity of a judge, even while he drank like a fish, partly from his own natural inclination to good liquor, partly in the way of good fellowship towards his guests. When the wine began to make some innovation on their heads, Master Lowestoffe, tired, perhaps, of the humours of Richie, who began to become yet more stoically contradictory and dogmatical than even in the earlier part of the entertainment, proposed to his friend to break up their debauch and join the gamesters.

The drawer was called accordingly, and Richie discharged the reckoning of the party, with a generous remuneration to

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'All I meant to say, captain, was that his servants go by Barnet, and he himself, with his page, pass through Enfield Chase; and he spoke to me yesterday of riding a soft pace.'

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The drawer was called accordingly, and Richie discharged the reckoning of the party, with a generous remuneration to

the attendants, which was received with cap and knee, and many assurances of — 'Kindly welcome, gentlemen.'

'I grieve we should part so soon, gentlemen,' said Richie to his companions; 'and I would you had cracked another quart ere you went, or stayed to take some slight matter of supper and a glass of Rhenish. I thank you, however, for having graced my poor collation thus far; and I commend you to fortune, in your own courses, for the ordinary neither was, is, nor shall be an element of mine.'

'Fare thee well, then,' said Lowestoffe, 'most sapient and sententious Master Moniplies. May you soon have another mortgage to redeem, and may I be there to witness it; and may you play the good fellow as heartily as you have done this day.'

'Nay, gentlemen, it is merely of your grace to say so; but, if you would but hear me speak a few words of admonition respecting this wicked ordinary —'

'Reserve the lesson, most honourable Richie,' said Lowestoffe, 'until I have lost all my money,' showing, at the same time, a purse indifferently well provided, 'and then the lecture is likely to have some weight.'

'And keep my share of it, Richie,' said the other Templar, showing an almost empty purse in his turn, 'till this be full again, and then I will promise to hear you with some patience.'

'Ay — ay, gallants,' said Richie, 'the full and the empty gang a'ae gate, and that is a grey one; but the time will come.'

'Nay, it is come already,' said Lowestoffe: 'they have set out the hazard table. Since you will peremptorily not go with us, why, farewell, Richie.'

'And farewell, gentlemen,' said Richie, and left the house, into which they returned.

Moniplies was not many steps from the door, when a person whom, lost in his reflections on gaming, ordinaries, and the manners of the age, he had not observed, and who had been as negligent on his part, ran full against him; and, when Richie desired to know whether he meant 'ony incivility,' replied by a curse on Scotland and all that belonged to it. A less round reflection on his country would, at any time, have provoked Richie, but more especially when he had a double quart of Canary and better in his pate. He was about to give a very rough answer, and to second his word by action, when a closer view of his antagonist changed his purpose.

'You are the vera lad in the world,' said Richie, 'whom I most wished to meet.'

'And you,' answered the stranger, 'or any of your beggarly countrymen, are the last sight I should ever wish to see. You Scots are ever fair and false, and an honest man cannot thrive within eye-shot of you.'

'As to our poverty, friend,' replied Richie, 'that is as Heaven pleases; but touching our falset, I'll prove to you that a Scotsman bears as leal and true a heart to his friend as ever beat in English doublet.'

'I care not whether he does or not,' said the gallant. 'Let me go; why keep you hold of my cloak? Let me go, or I will thrust you into the kennel.'

'I believe I could forgie ye, for you did me a good turn once, in plucking me out of it,' said the Scot.

'Beshrew my fingers, then, if they did so,' replied the stranger. 'I would your whole country lay there, along with you; and Heaven's curse blight the hand that helped to raise them! Why do you stop my way?' he added, fiercely.

'Because it is a bad one, Master Jenkin,' said Richie. 'Nay, never start about it, man; you see you are known. Alack-a-day! that an honest man's son should live to start at hearing himself called by his own name!'

Jenkin struck his brow violently with his clinched fist.

'Come — come,' said Richie, 'this passion availeth nothing. Tell me what gate go you?'

'To the devil!' answered Jin Vin.

'That is a black gate, if you speak according to the letter,' answered Richie; 'but if metaphorically, there are worse places in this great city than the Devil Tavern; and I care not if I go thither with you, and bestow a pottle of burnt sack on you; it will correct the crudities of my stomach, and form a gentle preparative for the leg of a cold pullet.'

'I pray you, in good fashion, to let me go,' said Jenkin. 'You may mean me kindly, and I wish you to have no wrong at my hand; but I am in the humour to be dangerous to myself or any one.'

'I will abide the risk,' said the Scot, 'if you will but come with me; and here is a place convenient, a howff nearer than the Devil, whilk is but an ill-omened, drouthy name for a tavern. This other of the St. Andrew is a quiet place, where I have ta'en my whetter now and then when I lodged in the neighbourhood of the Temple with Lord Glenvarloch. What the deil's the matter wi' the man, garr'd him gie sic a spang as that, and almaist brought himself and me on the causeway?'

'Do not name that false Scot's name to me,' said Jin Vin, 'if you would not have me go mad! I was happy before I saw him; he has been the cause of all the ill that has befallen me: he has made a knave and a madman of me!'

'If you are a knave,' said Richie, 'you have met an officer; if you are daft, you have met a keeper; but a gentle officer and a kind keeper. Look you, my gude friend, there has been twenty things said about this same lord in which there is no more truth than in the leasings of Mahound. The warst they can say of him is, that he is not always so amenable to good advice as I would pray him, you, and every young man to be. Come wi' me — just come ye wi' me; and, if a little spell of siller and a great deal of excellent counsel can relieve your occasions, all I can say is, you have had the luck to meet one capable of giving you both, and maist willing to bestow them.'

The pertinacity of the Scot prevailed over the sullenness of Vincent, who was indeed in a state of agitation and incapacity to think for himself, which led him to yield the more readily to the suggestions of another. He suffered himself to be dragged into the small tavern which Richie recommended, and where they soon found themselves seated in a snug niche, with a reeking pottle of burnt sack and a paper of sugar betwixt them. Pipes and tobacco were also provided, but were only used by Richie, who had adopted the custom of late, as adding considerably to the gravity and importance of his manner, and affording, as it were, a bland and pleasant accompaniment to the words of wisdom which flowed from his tongue. After they had filled their glasses and drunk them in silence, Richie repeated the question, whither his guest was going when they met so fortunately.

'I told you,' said Jenkin, 'I was going to destruction — I mean to the gaming-house. I am resolved to hazard these two or three pieces, to get as much as will pay for a passage with Captain Sharker, whose ship lies at Gravesend, bound for America; and so eastward hoe! I met one devil in the way already, who would have tempted me from my purpose, but I spurned him from me; you may be another for what I know. What degree of damnation do you propose for me,' he added wildly, 'and what is the price of it?'

'I would have you to know,' answered Richie, 'that I deal in no such commodities, whether as buyer or seller. But if you will tell me honestly the cause of your distress, I will do what is in my power to help you out of it — not being, how-

ever, prodigal of promises until I know the case, as a learned physician only gives advice when he has observed the diagnostics.'

'No one has anything to do with my affairs,' said the poor lad; and folding his arms on the table, he laid his head down on them, with the sullen dejection of the overburdened lama when it throws itself down to die in desperation.

Richie Moniplies, like most folks who have a good opinion of themselves, was fond of the task of consolation, which at once displayed his superiority (for the consoler is necessarily, for the time at least, superior to the afflicted person) and indulged his love of talking. He inflicted on the poor penitent a harangue of pitiless length, stuffed full of the usual topics of the mutability of human affairs, the eminent advantages of patience under affliction, the folly of grieving for what hath no remedy, the necessity of taking more care for the future, and some gentle rebukes on account of the past, which acid he threw in to assist in subduing the patient's obstinacy, as Hannibal used vinegar in cutting his way through rocks. It was not in human nature to endure this flood of commonplace eloquence in silence; and Jin Vin, whether desirous of stopping the flow of words crammed thus into his ear, 'against the stomach of his sense,' or whether confiding in Richie's protestations of friendship, which the wretched, says Fielding, are ever so ready to believe, or whether merely to give his sorrows vent in words, raised his head, and turning his red and swollen eyes to Richie —

'Cocksbones, man, only hold thy tongue and thou shalt know all about it; and then all I ask of thee is to shake hands and part. This Margaret Ramsay — you have seen her, man?'

'Once,' said Richie — 'once, at Master George Heriot's, in Lombard Street. I was in the room when they dined.'

'Ay, you helped to shift their trenchers, I remember,' said Jin Vin. 'Well, that same pretty girl — and I will uphold her the prettiest betwixt Paul's and the Bar — she is to be wedded to your Lord Glenvarloch, with a pestilence on him!'

'That is impossible,' said Richie — 'it is raving nonsense, man; they make April gouks of you cockneys every month in the year. The Lord Glenvarloch marry the daughter of a Lonnon mechanic! I would as soon believe the great Prester John would marry the daughter of a Jew packman.'

'Hark ye, brother,' said Jin Vin, 'I will allow no one to speak disregardfully of the city, for all I am in trouble.'

'I crave your pardon, man — I meant no offence,' said Richie; 'but as to the marriage, it is a thing simply impossible.'

'It is a thing that will take place, though, for the Duke and the Prince, and all of them, have a finger in it; and especially the old fool of a King, that makes her out to be some great woman in her own country, as all the Scots pretend to be, you know.'

'Master Vincent, but that you are under affliction,' said the consoler, offended in his turn, 'I would hear no national reflections.'

The afflicted youth apologised in his turn, but asserted, 'It was true that the King said Peg-a-Ramsay was some far-off sort of noblewoman; and that he had taken a great interest in the match, and had run about like an old gander, cackling about Peggie ever since he had seen her in hose and doublet — and no wonder,' added poor Vin, with a deep sigh.

'This may be all true,' said Richie, 'though it sounds strange in my ears; but, man, you should not speak evil of dignities. Curse not the King, Jenkin, not even in thy bed-chamber: stone walls have ears, no one has a right to know that better than I.'

'I do not curse the foolish old man,' said Jenkin; 'but I would have them carry things a peg lower. If they were to see on a plain field thirty thousand such pikes as I have seen in the artillery gardens, it would not be their long-haired courtiers would help them, I trow.'¹

'Hout tout, man,' said Richie, 'mind where the Stewarts come frae, and never think they would want spears or claymores either; but leaving sic matters, whilk are perilous to speak on, I say once more, what is your concern in all this matter?'

'What is it?' said Jenkin; 'why, have I not fixed on Peg-a-Ramsay to be my true love, from the day I came to her old father's shop? And have I not carried her pattens and her chopines for threes years, and borne her prayer-book to church, and brushed the cushion for her to kneel down upon; and did she ever say me nay?'

'I see no cause she had,' said Richie, 'if the like of such small services were all that ye proffered. Ah, man! there are few — very few, either of fools or of wise men, ken how to guide a woman.'

'Why, did I not serve her at the risk of my freedom, and

¹ See Military Training of Londoners. Note 43.

wellnigh at the risk of my neck? Did she not — no, it was not her neither, but that accursed beldam whom she caused to work upon me — persuade me like a fool to turn myself into a waterman to help my lord, and a plague to him! down to Scotland? And instead of going peaceably down to the ship at Gravesend, did not he rant and bully, and show his pistols, and make me land him at Greenwich, where he played some swaggering pranks, that helped both him and me into the Tower?

‘Aha!’ said Richie, throwing more than his usual wisdom into his looks, ‘so you were the green-jacketed waterman that rowed Lord Glenvarloch down the river?’

‘The more fool I, that did not souse him in the Thames,’ said Jenkin; ‘and I was the lad that would not confess one word of who or what I was, though they threatened to make me hug the Duke of Exeter’s daughter.’

‘Wha is she, man?’ said Richie; ‘she must be an ill-fashioned piece, if you’re so much afraid of her, and she come of such high kin.’

‘I mean the rack — the rack, man,’ said Jenkin. ‘Where were you bred that never heard of the Duke of Exeter’s daughter? But all the dukes and duchesses in England could have got nothing out of me; so the truth came out some other way, and I was set free. Home I ran, thinking myself one of the cleverest and happiest fellows in the ward. And she — she — she wanted to pay me with *money* for all my true service! and she spoke so sweetly and so coldly at the same time, I wished myself in the deepest dungeon of the Tower. I wish they had racked me to death before I heard this Scottishman was to chouse me out of my sweetheart!’

‘But are ye sure ye have lost her?’ said Richie. ‘It sounds strange in my ears that my Lord Glenvarloch should marry the daughter of a dealer; though there are uncouth marriages made in London, I’ll allow that.’

‘Why, I tell you this lord was no sooner clear of the Tower than he and Master George Heriot came to make proposals for her, with the King’s assent, and what not; and fine fair-day prospects of court favour for this lord, for he hath not an acre of land.’

‘Well, and what said the auld watch-maker?’ said Richie; ‘was he not, as might weel beseem him, ready to loup out of his skin-case for very joy?’

‘He multiplied six figures progressively, and reported the product; then gave his consent.’

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that he should drink what he called 'clean caup out.' 'This love,' he said, 'is but a bairnly matter for a brisk young fellow like yourself, Master Jenkin. And if ye must needs have a whimsy, though I think it would be safer to venture on a staid womanly body, why, here be as bonny lasses in London as this Peg-a-Ramsay. Ye need not sigh sae deeply, for it is very true : there is as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it. Now wherefore should you, who are as brisk and trig a young fellow of your inches as the sun needs to shine on — wherefore need you sit moping this way, and not try some bold way to better your fortune ?'

'I tell you, Master Moniplies,' said Jenkin, 'I am as poor as any Scot among you ; I have broke my indenture, and I think of running my country.'

'A-well-a-day !' said Richie, 'but that maunna be, man. I ken weel, by sad experience, that poortith takes away pith, and the man sits full still that has a rent in his breeks.¹ But courage, man ; you have served me heretofore, and I will serve you now. If you will but bring me to speech of this same captain, it shall be the best day's work you ever did.'

'I guess where you are, Master Richard : you would save your countryman's long purse,' said Jenkin. 'I cannot see how that should advantage me, but I reck not if I should bear a hand. I hate that braggart, that bloody-minded, cowardly bully. If you can get me mounted, I care not if I show you where the dame told me I should meet him ; but you must stand to the risk, for though he is a coward himself, I know he will have more than one stout fellow with him.'

'We 'll have a warrant, man,' said Richie, 'and the hue and cry to boot.'

'We will have no such thing,' said Jenkin, 'if I am to go with you. I am not the lad to betray any one to the harman-beck. You must do it by manhood if I am to go with you. I am sworn to cutter's law, and will sell no man's blood.'

'Aweel,' said Richie, 'a wilful man must have his way ; ye must think that I was born and bred where cracked crowns were plentier than whole ones. Besides, I have two noble friends here, Master Lowestoffe of the Temple and his cousin Master Ringwood, that will blithely be of so gallant a party.'

¹ This elegant speech was made by the Earl of Douglas, called Tineman, after being wounded and made prisoner at the battle of Shrewsbury, where

His well labouring sword
Had three times slain the semblance of the king.

‘And what did you do?’

‘I rushed into the streets,’ said the poor lad, ‘with a burning heart and a bloodshot eye; and where did I first find myself, but with that beldam, Mother Suddlechop; and what did she propose to me, but to take the road?’

‘Take the road, man! in what sense?’ said Richie.

‘Even as a clerk to St. Nicholas — as a highwayman, like Pains and Peto, and the good fellows in the play. And who think you was to be my captain? — for she had the whole out ere I could speak to her; I fancy she took silence for consent, and thought me damned too unutterably to have one thought left that savoured of redemption — who was to be my captain, but the knave that you saw me cudgel at the ordinary when you waited on Lord Glenvarloch — a cowardly, sharking, thievish bully about town here, whom they call Colepepper.’

‘Colepepper — umph — I know somewhat of that smaik,’ said Richie; ‘ken ye by ony chance where he may be heard of, Master Jenkin? ye wad do me a sincere service to tell me.’

‘Why, he lives something obscurely,’ answered the apprentice, ‘on account of suspicion of some villainy — I believe that horrid murder in Whitefriars, or some such matter. But I might have heard all about him from Dame Suddlechop, for she spoke of my meeting him at Enfield Chase, with some other good fellows, to do a robbery on one that goes northward with a store of treasure.’

‘And you did not agree to this fine project?’ said Moniplies.

‘I cursed her for a hag, and came away about my business,’ answered Jenkin.

‘Ay, and what said she to that, man? That would startle her,’ said Richie.

‘Not a whit. She laughed, and said she was in jest,’ answered Jenkin; ‘but I know the she-devil’s jest from her earnest too well to be taken in that way. But she knows I would never betray her.’

‘Betray her! No,’ replied Richie; ‘but are ye in any shape bound to this birkie Peppercull, or Colepepper, or whatever they call him, that ye suld let him do a robbery on the honest gentleman that is travelling to the North, and maybe a kindly Scot for what we know?’

‘Ay — going home with a load of English money,’ said Jenkin. ‘But be he who he will, they may rob the whole world an they list, for I am robbed and ruined.’

Richie filled up his friend’s cup to the brim, and insisted

CHAPTER XXXVI

The thieves have bound the true men. Now, could thou and I rob the thieves, and go merrily to London.

Henry IV. Part I.

THE sun was high upon the glades of Enfield Chase, and the deer, with which it then abounded, were seen sporting in picturesque groups among the ancient oaks of the forest, when a cavalier and a lady, on foot, although in riding-apparel, sauntered slowly up one of the long alleys which were cut through the park for the convenience of the hunters. Their only attendant was a page, who, riding a Spanish jennet, which seemed to bear a heavy cloak-bag, followed them at a respectful distance. The female, attired in all the fantastic finery of the period, with more than the usual quantity of bugles, flounces, and trimmings, and holding her fan of ostrich feathers in one hand and her riding-mask of black velvet in the other, seemed anxious, by all the little coquetry practised on such occasions, to secure the notice of her companion, who sometimes heard her prattle without seeming to attend to it, and at other times interrupted his train of graver reflections to reply to her.

‘Nay, but, my lord — my lord, you walk so fast, you will leave me behind you. Nay, I will have hold of your arm; but how to manage with my mask and my fan? Why would you not let me bring my waiting-gentlewoman to follow us, and hold my things? But see, I will put my fan in my girdle, so! and now that I have a hand to hold you with, you shall not run away from me.’

‘Come on, then,’ answered the gallant, ‘and let us walk apace, since you would not be persuaded to stay with your gentlewoman, as you call her, and with the rest of the baggage. You may perhaps see *that*, though, you will not like to see.’

She took hold of his arm accordingly; but, as he continued to walk at the same pace, she shortly let go her hold, exclaiming that he had hurt her hand. The cavalier stopped, and looked

'Lowestoffe and Ringwood!' said Jenkin; 'they are both brave gallants, they will be sure company. Know you where they are to be found?'

'Ay, marry do I,' replied Richie. 'They are fast at the cards and dice, till the sma' hours, I warrant them.'

'They are gentlemen of trust and honour,' said Jenkin, 'and; if they advise it, I will try the adventure. Go, try if you can bring them hither, since you have so much to say with them. We must not be seen abroad together. I know not how it is, Master Moniplies,' continued he, as his countenance brightened up, and while, in his turn, he filled the cups, 'but I feel my heart something lighter since I have thought of this matter.'

'Thus it is to have counsellors, Master Jenkin,' said Richie; 'and truly I hope to hear you say that your heart is as light as a lavrock's, and that before you are many days aulder. Never smile and shake your head, but mind what I tell you; and bide here in the meanwhile, till I go to seek these gallants. I warrant you, cart-ropes would not hold them back from such a ploy as I shall propose to them.'

'Shall we be there to-night, my lord?' said Nelly, drying her tears.

'To-night, Nelly! no, nor this night fortnight.'

'Now, the Lord be with us and keep us! But shall we not go by sea, my lord? I thought everybody came from Scotland by sea. I am sure Lord Glenvarloch and Richie Moniplies came up by sea.'

'There is a wide difference between coming up and going down, Nelly,' answered Lord Dalgarno.

'And so there is, for certain,' said his simple companion. 'But yet I think I heard people speaking of going down to Scotland by sea, as well as coming up. Are you well avised of the way? Do you think it possible we can go by land, my sweet lord?'

'It is but trying, my sweet lady,' said Lord Dalgarno. 'Men say England and Scotland are in the same island, so one would hope there may be some road betwixt them by land.'

'I shall never be able to ride so far,' said the lady.

'We will have your saddle stuffed softer,' said the lord. 'I tell you that you shall mew your city slough, and change from the caterpillar of a paltry lane into the butterfly of a prince's garden. You shall have as many tires as there are hours in the day — as many handmaidens as there are days in the week — as many menials as there are weeks in the year — and you shall ride a-hunting and hawking with a lord, instead of waiting upon an old ship-chandler, who could do nothing but hawk and spit.'

'Ay, but will you make me your lady?' said Dame Nelly.

'Ay, surely — what else?' replied the lord. 'My lady-love.'

'Ay, but I mean your lady-wife,' said Nelly.

'Truly, Nell, in that I cannot promise to oblige you. A lady-wife,' continued Dalgarno, 'is a very different thing from a lady-love.'

'I heard from Mrs. Suddlechop, whom you lodged me with since I left poor old John Christie, that Lord Glenvarloch is to marry David Ramsay the clockmaker's daughter?'

'There is much betwixt the cup and the lip, Nelly. I wear something about me may break the banns of that hopeful alliance, before the day is much older,' answered Lord Dalgarno.

'Well, but my father was as good a man as old Davie Ramsay, and as well to pass in the world, my lord; and, therefore, why should you not marry me? You have done me harm enough, I trow; wherefore should you not do me this justice?'

at the pretty hand and arm which she showed him, with exclamations against his cruelty. 'I daresay,' she said, baring her wrist and a part of her arm, 'it is all black and blue to the very elbow.'

'I daresay you are a silly little fool,' said the cavalier, carelessly kissing the aggrieved arm; 'it is only a pretty incarnate which sets off the blue veins.'

'Nay, my lord, now it is you are silly,' answered the dame; 'but I am glad I can make you speak and laugh on any terms this morning. I am sure, if I did insist on following you into the forest, it was all for the sake of diverting you. I am better company than your page, I trow. And now, tell me, these pretty things with horns, be they not deer?'

'Even such they be, Nelly,' answered her neglectful attendant.

'And what can the great folks do with so many of them, forsooth?'

'They send them to the city, Nell, wheré wise men make venison pasties of their flesh, and wear their horns for trophies,' answered Lord Dalgarno, whom our reader has already recognised.

'Nay, now you laugh at me, my lord,' answered his companion; 'but I know all about venison, whatsoever you may think. I always tasted it once a-year when we dined with Mr. Deputy,' she continued, sadly, as a sense of her degradation stole across a mind bewildered with vanity and folly, 'though he would not speak to me now, if we met together in the narrowest lane in the ward!'

'I warrant he would not,' said Lord Dalgarno, 'because thou, Nell, wouldst dash him with a single look; for I trust thou hast more spirit than to throw away words on such a fellow as he?'

'Who, I!' said Dame Nelly. 'Nay, I scorn the proud princex too much for that. Do you know, he made all the folks in the ward stand cap in hand to him, my poor old John Christie and all?' Here her recollection began to overflow at her eyes.

'A plague on your whimpering,' said Dalgarno, somewhat harshly. 'Nay, never look pale for the matter, Nell. I am not angry with you, you simple fool. But what would you have me think, when you are eternally looking back upon your dungeon yonder by the river, which smelt of pitch and old cheese worse than a Welshman does of onions, and all this when I am taking you down to a castle as fine as is in Fairyland!'

and the extensive domains adjacent had belonged in elder days. A wild woodland prospect led the eye at various points through broad and seemingly interminable alleys, which, meeting at this point as at a common centre, diverged from each other as they receded, and had, therefore, been selected by Lord Dalgarno as the rendezvous for the combat, which, through the medium of Richie Moniplies, he had offered to his injured friend, Lord Glenvarloch.

‘He will surely come?’ he said to himself. ‘Cowardice was not wont to be his fault; at least he was bold enough in the Park. Perhaps yonder churl may not have carried my message? But no—he is a sturdy knave, one of those would prize their master’s honour above their life. Look to the palfrey, Lutin, and see thou let him not loose, and cast thy falcon glance down every avenue to mark if any one comes. Buckingham has undergone my challenge, but the proud minion pleads the King’s paltry commands for refusing to answer me. If I can baffle this Glenvarloch, or slay him—if I can spoil him of his honour or his life, I shall go down to Scotland with credit sufficient to gild over past mischances. I know my dear countrymen; they never quarrel with any one who brings them home either gold or martial glory, much more if he has both gold and laurels.’

As he thus reflected, and called to mind the disgrace which he had suffered, as well as the causes he imagined for hating Lord Glenvarloch, his countenance altered under the influence of his contending emotions, to the terror of Nelly, who, sitting unnoticed at his feet, and looking anxiously in his face, beheld the cheek kindle, the mouth become compressed, the eye dilated, and the whole countenance express the desperate and deadly resolution of one who awaits an instant and decisive encounter with a mortal enemy. The loneliness of the place, the scenery so different from that to which alone she had been accustomed, the dark and sombre air which crept so suddenly over the countenance of her seducer, his command imposing silence upon her, and the apparent strangeness of his conduct in idling away so much time without any obvious cause, when a journey of such length lay before them, brought strange thoughts into her weak brain. She had read of women, seduced from their matrimonial duties by sorcerers allied to the hellish powers, nay, by the Father of Evil himself, who, after conveying his victim into some desert remote from human kind, exchanged the pleasing shape in which he gained her affections for all his natural horrors. She chased this wild idea away as it crowded

'For two good reasons, Nelly. Fate put a husband on you, and the King passed a wife upon me,' answered Lord Dalgarno.

'Ay, my lord,' said Nelly, 'but they remain in England, and we go to Scotland.'

'Thy argument is better than thou art aware of, said Lord Dalgarno. 'I have heard Scottish lawyers say the matrimonial tie may be unclasped in our happy country by the gentle hand of the ordinary course of law, whereas in England it can only be burst by an act of Parliament. Well, Nelly, we will look into that matter; and whether we get married again or no, we will at least do our best to get unmarried.'

'Shall we indeed, my honey-sweet lord? And then I will think less about John Christie, for he will marry again, I warrant you, for he is well to pass; and I would be glad to think he had somebody to take care of him, as I used to do, poor loving old man! He was a kind man, though he was a score of years older than I; and I hope and pray he will never let a young lord cross his honest threshold again!'

Here the dame was once more much inclined to give way to a passion of tears; but Lord Dalgarno conjured down the emotion by saying, with some asperity — 'I am weary of these April passions, my pretty mistress, and I think you will do well to preserve your tears for some more pressing occasion. Who knows what turn of fortune may in a few minutes call for more of them than you can render?'

'Goodness, my lord! what mean you by such expressions? John Christie, the kind heart! used to keep no secrets from me, and I hope your lordship will not hide your counsel from me?'

'Sit down beside me on this bank,' said the nobleman; 'I am bound to remain here for a short space, and if you can be but silent, I should like to spend a part of it in considering how far I can, on the present occasion, follow the respectable example which you recommend to me.'

The place at which he stopped was at that time little more than a mound, partly surrounded by a ditch, from which it derived the name of Camlet Moat. A few hewn stones there were, which had escaped the fate of many others that had been used in building different lodges in the forest for the royal keepers. These vestiges, just sufficient to show that 'here in former times the hand of man had been,' marked the ruins of the abode of a once illustrious but long-forgotten family, the Mandevilles, Earls of Essex, to whom Enfield Chase

and the extensive domains adjacent had belonged in elder days. A wild woodland prospect led the eye at various points through broad and seemingly interminable alleys, which, meeting at this point as at a common centre, diverged from each other as they receded, and had, therefore, been selected by Lord Dalgarno as the rendezvous for the combat, which, through the medium of Richie Moniplies, he had offered to his injured friend, Lord Glenvarloch.

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itself upon her weak and bewildered imagination; yet she might have lived to see it realised allegorically, if not literally, but for the accident which presently followed.

The page, whose eyes were remarkably acute, at length called out to his master, pointing with his finger at the same time down one of the alleys, that horsemen were advancing in that direction. Lord Dalgarno started up, and shading his eyes with his hand, gazed eagerly down the alley; when, at the same instant, he received a shot, which, grazing his hand, passed right through his brain, and laid him a lifeless corpse at the feet, or rather across the lap, of the unfortunate victim of his profligacy. The countenance, whose varied expression she had been watching for the last five minutes, was convulsed for an instant, and then stiffened into rigidity for ever. Three ruffians rushed from the brake from which the shot had been fired, ere the smoke was dispersed. One, with many imprecations, seized on the page; another on the female, upon whose cries he strove by the most violent threats to impose silence; while the third began to undo the burden from the page's horse. But an instant rescue prevented their availing themselves of the advantage they had obtained.

It may easily be supposed that Richie Moniplies, having secured the assistance of the two Templars, ready enough to join in anything which promised a fray, with Jin Vin to act as their guide, had set off, gallantly mounted and well armed, under the belief that they would reach Camlet Moat before the robbers, and apprehend them in the fact. They had not calculated that, according to the custom of robbers in other countries, but contrary to that of the English highwaymen of those days, they meant to ensure robbery by previous murder. An accident also happened to delay them a little while on the road. In riding through one of the glades of the forest, they found a man dismounted and sitting under a tree, groaning with such bitterness of spirit that Lowestoffe could not forbear asking if he was hurt. In answer, he said he was an unhappy man in pursuit of his wife, who had been carried off by a villain; and as he raised his countenance, the eyes of Richie, to his great astonishment, encountered the visage of John Christie.

'For the Almighty's sake, help me, Master Moniplies!' he said; 'I have learned my wife is but a short mile before, with that black villain Lord Dalgarno.'

'Have him forward by all means,' said Lowestoffe — 'a second Orpheus seeking his Eurydice! Have him forward; we will

save Lord Dalgarno's purse and ease him of his mistress. Have him with us, were it but for the variety of the adventure. I owe his lordship a grudge for rooking me. We have ten minutes good.'

But it is dangerous to calculate closely in matters of life and death. In all probability the minute or two which was lost in mounting John Christie behind one of their party might have saved Lord Dalgarno from his fate. Thus his criminal amour became the indirect cause of his losing his life; and thus 'our pleasant vices are made the whips to scourge us.'

The riders arrived on the field at full gallop the moment after the shot was fired; and Richie, who had his own reasons for attaching himself to Colepepper, who was bustling to untie the portmanteau from the page's saddle, pushed against him with such violence as to overthrow him, his own horse at the same time stumbling and dismounting his rider, who was none of the first equestrians. The undaunted Richie immediately arose, however, and grappled with the ruffian with such good will that, though a strong fellow, and though a coward now rendered desperate, Moniplies got him under, wrenched a long knife from his hand, dealt him a desperate stab with his own weapon, and leaped on his feet; and, as the wounded man struggled to follow his example, he struck him upon the head with the butt-end of a musketoon, which last blow proved fatal.

'Bravo, Richie!' cried Lowestoffe, who had himself engaged at sword-point with one of the ruffians, and soon put him to flight. 'Bravo! why, man, there lies sin, struck down like an ox, and iniquity's throat cut like a calf.'

'I know not why you should upbraid me with my up-bringing, Master Lowestoffe,' answered Richie with great composure; 'but I can tell you the shambles is not a bad place for training one to this work.'

The other Templar now shouted loudly to them — 'If ye be men, come hither; here lies Lord Dalgarno, murdered!'

Lowestoffe and Richie ran to the spot, and the page took the opportunity, finding himself now neglected on all hands, to ride off in a different direction; and neither he nor the considerable sum with which his horse was burdened were ever heard of from that moment.

The third ruffian had not waited the attack of the Templar and Jin Vin, the latter of whom had put down old Christie from behind him, that he might ride the lighter; and the whole five now stood gazing with horror on the bloody corpse of the young

nobleman, and the wild sorrow of the female, who tore her hair and shrieked in the most disconsolate manner, until her agony was at once checked, or rather received a new direction, by the sudden and unexpected appearance of her husband, who, fixing on her a cold and severe look, said, in a tone suited to his manner — ‘Ay, woman! thou takest on sadly for the loss of thy paramour.’ Then looking on the bloody corpse of him from whom he had received so deep an injury, he repeated the solemn words of Scripture, “Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I will repay it.” I, whom thou hast injured, will be first to render thee the decent offices due to the dead.’

So saying, he covered the dead body with his cloak, and then looking on it for a moment, seemed to reflect on what he had next to perform. As the eye of the injured man slowly passed from the body of the seducer to the partner and victim of his crime, who had sunk down to his feet, which she clasped without venturing to look up, his features, naturally coarse and saturnine, assumed a dignity of expression which overawed the young Templars, and repulsed the officious forwardness of Richie Moniplies, who was at first eager to have thrust in his advice and opinion. ‘Kneel-not to me, woman,’ he said, ‘but kneel to the God thou hast offended more than thou couldst offend such another worm as thyself. How often have I told thee, when thou wert at the gayest and the lightest, that pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall? Vanity brought folly, and folly brought sin, and sin hath brought death, his original companion. Thou must needs leave duty, and decency, and domestic love, to revel it gaily with the wild and with the wicked; and there thou liest, like a crushed worm, writhing beside the lifeless body of thy paramour. Thou hast done me much wrong — dishonoured me among friends — driven credit from my house, and peace from my fireside. But thou wert my first and only love, and I will not see thee an utter castaway, if it lies with me to prevent it. Gentlemen, I render ye such thanks as a broken-hearted man can give. Richard, commend me to your honourable master. I added gall to the bitterness of his affliction, but I was deluded. Rise up, woman, and follow me.’

He raised her up by the arm, while, with streaming eyes and bitter sobs, she endeavoured to express her penitence. She kept her hands spread over her face, yet suffered him to lead her away; and it was only as they turned around a brake which concealed the scene they had left, that she turned back,

and casting one wild and hurried glance towards the corpse of Dalgarno, uttered a shriek, and, clinging to her husband's arm, exclaimed wildly, 'Save me—save me! They have murdered him!'

Lowestoffe was much moved by what he had witnessed; but he was ashamed, as a town gallant, of his own unfashionable emotion, and did a force to his feelings when he exclaimed, 'Ay, let them go—the kind-hearted, believing, forgiving husband—the liberal, accommodating spouse. Oh, what a generous creature is your true London husband! Horns hath he, but, tame as a fatted ox, he goreth not. I should like to see her when she has exchanged her mask and riding-beaver for her peaked hat and muffler. We will visit them at Paul's Wharf, coz; it will be a convenient acquaintance.'

'You had better think of catching the gipsy thief, Lutin,' said Richie Moniplies, 'for, by my faith, he is off with his master's baggage and the siller.'

A keeper, with his assistants and several other persons, had now come to the spot, and made hue and cry after Lutin, but in vain. To their custody the Templars surrendered the dead bodies, and after going through some formal investigation, they returned, with Richard and Vincent, to London, where they received great applause for their gallantry. Vincent's errors were easily expiated in consideration of his having been the means of breaking up this band of villains; and there is some reason to think that what would have diminished the credit of the action in other instances rather added to it in the actual circumstances, namely, that they came too late to save Lord Dalgarno.

George Heriot, who suspected how matters stood with Vincent, requested and obtained permission from his master to send the poor young fellow on an important piece of business to Paris. We are unable to trace his fate farther, but believe it was prosperous, and that he entered into an advantageous partnership with his fellow-apprentice, upon old Davie Ramsay retiring from business, in consequence of his daughter's marriage. That eminent antiquary, Dr. Dryasdust, is possessed of an antique watch, with a silver dial-plate, the mainspring being a piece of catgut instead of a chain, which bears the names of 'Vincent and Tunstall, memory-monitors.'

Master Lowestoffe failed not to vindicate his character as a man of gaiety by inquiring after John Christie and Dame Nelly; but, greatly to his surprise, indeed to his loss, for he

had wagered ten pieces that he would domesticate himself in the family, he found the good-will, as it was called, of the shop was sold, the stock auctioned, and the late proprietor and his wife gone, no one knew whither. The prevailing belief was that they had emigrated to one of the new settlements in America.

Lady Dalgarno received the news of her unworthy husband's death with a variety of emotions, among which horror that he should have been cut off in the middle career of his profligacy was the most prominent. The incident greatly deepened her melancholy, and injured her health, already shaken by previous circumstances. Repossessed of her own fortune by her husband's death, she was anxious to do justice to Lord Glenvarloch by treating for the recovery of the mortgage. But the scrivener, having taken fright at the late events, had left the city and absconded, so that it was impossible to discover into whose hands the papers had now passed. Richard Moniplies was silent for his own reasons; the Templars, who had witnessed the transaction, kept the secret at his request; and it was universally believed that the scrivener had carried off the writings along with him. We may here observe, that fears similar to those of the scrivener freed London for ever from the presence of Dame Suddlechop, who ended her career in the *rasp-haus* (viz. bridewell) of Amsterdam.

The stout old Lord Huntinglen, with a haughty carriage and unmoistened eye, accompanied the funeral procession of his only son to its last abode; and perhaps the single tear which fell at length upon the coffin was given less to the fate of the individual than to the extinction of the last male of his ancient race.

CHAPTER XXXVII

Jacques. There is, sure, another flood toward, and these couples are coming to the ark ! Here comes a pair of very strange beasts.

As You Like It.

THE fashion of such narratives as the present changes like other earthly things. Time was that the tale-teller was obliged to wind up his story by a circumstantial description of the wedding, bedding, and throwing the stocking, as the grand catastrophe to which, through so many circumstances of doubt and difficulty, he had at length happily conducted his hero and heroine. Not a circumstance was then omitted, from the manly ardour of the bridegroom and the modest blushes of the bride to the parson's new surplice and the silk tabinet mantua of the bridesmaid. But such descriptions are now discarded, for the same reason, I suppose, that public marriages are no longer fashionable, and that, instead of calling together their friends to a feast and a dance, the happy couple elope in a solitary post-chaise, as secretly as if they meant to go to Gretna Green or to do worse. I am not ungrateful for a change which saves an author the trouble of attempting in vain to give a new colour to the commonplace description of such matters ; but, notwithstanding, I find myself forced upon it in the present instance, as circumstances sometimes compel a stranger to make use of an old road which has been for some time shut up. The experienced reader may have already remarked that the last chapter was employed in sweeping out of the way all the unnecessary and less interesting characters, that I might clear the floor for a blithe bridal.

In truth, it would be unpardonable to pass over slightly what so deeply interested our principal personage, King James. That learned and good-humoured monarch made no great figure in the politics of Europe ; but then, to make amends, he was prodigiously busy when he could find a fair opportunity of intermeddling with the private affairs of his loving subjects,

and the approaching marriage of Lord Glenvarloch was matter of great interest to him. He had been much struck, that is, for him, who was not very accessible to such emotions, with the beauty and embarrassment of the pretty Peg-a-Ramsay, as he called her, when he first saw her, and he glorified himself greatly on the acuteness which he had displayed in detecting her disguise, and in carrying through the whole inquiry which took place in consequence of it.

He laboured for several weeks, while the courtship was in progress, with his own royal eyes, so as wellnigh to wear out, he declared, a pair of her father's best barnacles, in searching through old books and documents, for the purpose of establishing the bride's pretensions to a noble, though remote, descent, and thereby remove the only objection which envy might conceive against the match. In his own opinion, at least, he was eminently successful; for, when Sir Mungo Malagrowth one day, in the presence-chamber, took upon him to grieve bitterly for the bride's lack of pedigree, the monarch cut him short with — 'Ye may save your grief for your ain next occasions, Sir Mungo; for, by our royal saul, we will uphauld her father, Davie Ramsay, to be a gentleman of nine descents, whase great gudesire came of the auld martial stock of the house of Dalwalsey, than whom better men never did, and better never will, draw sword for king and country. Heard ye never of Sir William Ramsay of Dalwalsey, man, of whom John Fordoun saith, "*He was bellicosissimus, nobilissimus*"? His castle stands to witness for itsell, not three miles from Dalkeith, man, and within a mile of Bannockrig. Davie Ramsay came of that auld and honoured stock, and I trust he hath not derogated from his ancestors by his present craft. They all wrought wi' steel, man; only the auld knights drilled holes wi' their swords in their enemies' corslets, and he saws nicks in his brass wheels. And I hope it is as honourable to give eyes to the blind as to slash them out of the head of those that see; and to show us how to value our time as it passes, as to fling it away in drinking, brawling, spear-splintering, and such-like unchristian doings. And you maun understand that Davie Ramsay is no mechanic, but follows a liberal art, which approacheth almost to the act of creating a living being, seeing it may be said of a watch, as Claudius saith of the sphere of Archimedes, the Syracusan —

Inclusus variis famulatur spiritus astris,
Et vivum certis motibus urget opus.

'Your Majesty had best give auld Davie a coat-of-arms as well as a pedigree,' said Sir Mungo.

'It's done or ye bade, Sir Mungo,' said the King; 'and I trust we, who are the fountain of all earthly honour, are free to spirt a few drops of it on one so near our person, without offence to the knight of Castle Girmigo. We have already spoken with the learned men of the Herald's College, and we propose to grant him an augmented coat-of-arms, being his paternal coat, charged with the crown-wheel of a watch in chief, for a difference; and we purpose to add Time and Eternity, for supporters, as soon as the Garter King-at-Arms shall be able to devise how Eternity is to be represented.'

'I would make him twice as muckle as Time,'¹ said Archie Armstrong, the court fool, who chanced to be present when the King stated this dilemma.

'Peace, man — ye shall be whippet,' said the King, in return for this hint; 'and you, my liege subjects of England, may weel take a hint from what we have said, and not be in such a hurry to laugh at our Scottish pedigrees, though they be somewhat long derived and difficult to be deduced. Ye see that a man of right gentle blood may, for a season, lay by his gentry, and yet ken whare to find it, when he has occasion for it. It would be as unseemly for a packman, or pedlar, as ye call a travelling-merchant, whilk is a trade to which our native subjects of Scotland are specially addicted, to be blazing his genealogy in the faces of those to whom he sells a bawbee's worth of ribbon, as it would be to him to have a beaver on his head and a rapier by his side, when the pack was on his shoulders. Na — na, he hings his sword on the cleek, lays his beaver on the shelf, puts his pedigree into his pocket, and gangs as douchely and cannily about his peddling craft as if his blood was nae better than ditch-water; but let our pedlar be transformed, as I have kend it happen mair than ance, into a bein thriving merchant, then ye shall have a transformation, my lords.

In nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas.

Out he pulls his pedigree, on he buckles his sword, gives his beaver a brush, and cocks it in the face of all creation. We mention these things at the mair length, because we would have you all to know that it is not without due consideration

¹ Chaucer says, there is nothing new but what it has been old. The reader has here the original of an anecdote which has since been fathered on a Scottish chief of our own time.

of the circumstances of all parties that we design, in a small and private way, to honour with our own royal presence the marriage of Lord Glenvarloch with Margaret Ramsay, daughter and heiress of David Ramsay, our horologer, and a cadet only thrice removed from the ancient house of Dalwalsey. We are grieved we cannot have the presence of the noble chief of that house at the ceremony; but where there is honour to be won abroad, the Lord Dalwalsey is seldom to be found at home. *Sic fuit, est, et erit.* Jingling Geordie, as ye stand to the cost of the marriage-feast, we look for good cheer.'

Heriot bowed, as in duty bound. In fact, the King, who was a great politician about trifles, had manœuvred greatly on this occasion, and had contrived to get the Prince and Buckingham despatched on an expedition to Newmarket, in order that he might find an opportunity in their absence of indulging himself in his own gossiping, 'coshering' habits, which were distasteful to Charles, whose temper inclined to formality, and with which even the favourite, of late, had not thought it worth while to seem to sympathise.

When the levee was dismissed, Sir Mungo Malagrowth seized upon the worthy citizen in the courtyard of the palace, and detained him, in spite of all his efforts, for the purpose of subjecting him to the following scrutiny:—

'This is a sair job on you, Master George—the King must have had little consideration—this will cost you a bonny penny, this wedding-dinner?'

'It will not break me, Sir Mungo,' answered Heriot; 'the King hath a right to see the table which his bounty hath supplied for years well covered for a single day.'

'Vera true—vera true; we'll have a' to pay, I doubt, less or mair: a sort of penny-wedding¹ it will prove, where all men contribute to the young folks' maintenance, that they may not have just four bare legs in a bed thegither. What do you purpose to give, Master George? we begin with the city when money is in question.'

'Only a trifle, Sir Mungo: I give my god-daughter the marriage-ring. It is a curious jewel—I bought it in Italy; it belonged to Cosmo de Medici. The bride will not need my help; she has an estate which belonged to her maternal grandfather.'

'The auld soap-boiler,' said Sir Mungo; 'it will need some of his suds to scour the blot out of the Glenvarloch shield. I have heard that estate was no great things.'

¹ See Note 44.

'It is as good as some posts at court, Sir Mungo, which are coveted by persons of high quality,' replied George Heriot.

'Court favour, said ye!—court favour, Master Heriot!' replied Sir Mungo, choosing then to use his malady of misapprehension. 'Moonshine in water, poor thing, if that is all she is to be tochered with. I am truly solicitous about them.'

'I will let you into a secret,' said the citizen, 'which will relieve your tender anxiety. The dowager Lady Dalgarno gives a competent fortune to the bride, and settles the rest of her estate upon her nephew the bridegroom.'

'Ay, say ye sae?' said Sir Mungo, 'just to show her regard to her husband that is in the tomb; lucky that her nephew did not send him there. It was a strange story that death of poor Lord Dalgarno; some folk think the poor gentleman had much wrong. Little good comes of marrying the daughter of the house you are at feud with; indeed, it was less poor Dalgarno's fault than theirs that forced the match on him. But I am glad the young folks are to have something to live on, come how it like, whether by charity or inheritance. But if the Lady Dalgarno were to sell all she has, even to her very wylie-coat, she canna gie them back the fair Castle of Glenvarloch: that is lost and gane—lost and gane.'

'It is but too true,' said George Heriot; 'we cannot discover what has become of the villain Andrew Skurliewhitter, or what Lord Dalgarno has done with the mortgage.'

'Assigned it away to some one, that his wife might not get it after he was gane; it would have disturbed him in his grave to think Glenvarloch should get that land back again,' said Sir Mungo; 'depend on it, he will have ta'en sure measures to keep that noble lordship out of her gripe or her nevoy's either.'

'Indeed, it is but too probable, Sir Mungo,' said Master Heriot; 'but, as I am obliged to go and look after many things in consequence of this ceremony, I must leave you to comfort yourself with the reflection.'

'The bride-day, you say, is to be on the thirtieth of the instant month?' said Sir Mungo, hallooing after the citizen. 'I will be with you in the hour of cause.'

'The King invites the guests,' said George Heriot, without turning back.

'The base-born, ill-bred mechanic!' soliloquised Sir Mungo, 'if it were not the odd score of pounds he lent me last week, I would teach him how to bear himself to a man of quality! But I will be at the bridal banquet in spite of him.'

Sir Mungo contrived to get invited, or commanded, to attend on the bridal accordingly, at which there were but few persons present; for James, on such occasions, preferred a snug privacy, which gave him liberty to lay aside the encumbrance, as he felt it to be, of his regal dignity. The company was very small, and indeed there were at least two persons absent whose presence might have been expected. The first of these was the Lady Dalgarno, the state of whose health, as well as the recent death of her husband, precluded her attendance on the ceremony. The other absentee was Richie Moniplies, whose conduct for some time past had been extremely mysterious. Regulating his attendance on Lord Glenvarloch entirely according to his own will and pleasure, he had, ever since the rencounter in Enfield Chase, appeared regularly at his bedside in the morning, to assist him to dress, and at his wardrobe in the evening. The rest of the day he disposed of at his own pleasure, without control from his lord, who had now a complete establishment of attendants. Yet he was somewhat curious to know how the fellow disposed of so much of his time; but on this subject Richie showed no desire to be communicative.

On the morning of the bridal day, Richie was particularly attentive in doing all a *valet-de-chambre* could, so as to set off to advantage the very handsome figure of his master; and when he had arranged his dress with the utmost exactness, and put to his long curled locks what he called 'the finishing touch of the redding-kaim,' he gravely knelt down, kissed his hand, and bade him farewell, saying, that he humbly craved leave to discharge himself of his lordship's service.

'Why, what humour is this?' said Lord Glenvarloch; 'if you mean to discharge yourself of my service, Richie, I suppose you intend to enter my wife's?'

'I wish her good ladyship that shall soon be, and your good lordship, the blessings of as good a servant as myself, in Heaven's good time,' said Richie; 'but fate hath so ordained it that I can henceforth only be your servant in the way of friendly courtesy.'

'Well, Richie,' said the young lord, 'if you are tired of service, we will seek some better provision for you; but you will wait on me to the church, and partake of the bridal dinner?'

'Under favour, my lord,' answered Richie, 'I must remind you of our covenant, having presently some pressing business of mine own, whilk will detain me during the ceremony; but

I will not fail to prie Master George's good cheer, in respect he has made very costly fare, whilk it would be unthankful not to partake of.'

'Do as you list,' answered Lord Glenvarloch; and, having bestowed a passing thought on the whimsical and pragmatistical disposition of his follower, he dismissed the subject for others better suited to the day.

The reader must fancy the scattered flowers which strewed the path of the happy couple to church — the loud music which accompanied the procession — the marriage service performed by a bishop — the King, who met them at St. Paul's, giving away the bride, to the great relief of her father, who had thus time, during the ceremony, to calculate the just quotient to be laid on the pinion of report in a timepiece which he was then putting together.

When the ceremony was finished, the company were transported in the royal carriages to George Heriot's, where a splendid collation was provided for the marriage guests in the Foljambe apartments. The King no sooner found himself in this snug retreat than, casting from him his sword and belt with as much haste as if they burnt his fingers, and flinging his plumed hat on the table, as who should say, 'Lie there, authority!' he swallowed a hearty cup of wine to the happiness of the married couple, and began to amble about the room, mumping, laughing, and cracking jests, neither the wittiest nor the most delicate, but accompanied and applauded by shouts of his own mirth, in order to encourage that of the company. Whilst his Majesty was in the midst of this gay humour, and a call to the banquet was anxiously expected, a servant whispered Master Heriot forth of the apartment. When he re-entered, he walked up to the King, and, in his turn, whispered something, at which James started.

'He is not wanting his siller?' said the King, shortly and sharply.

'By no means, my liege,' answered Heriot. 'It is a subject he states himself as quite indifferent about, so long as it can pleasure your Majesty.'

'Body of us, man!' said the King, 'it is the speech of a true man and a loving subject, and we will grace him accordingly; what though he be but a carle — a twopenny cat may look at a king. Swith, man! have him — *pandite fores*. Moniplies! They should have called the chield Monypennies, though I sall warrant you English think we have not such a name in Scotland.'

'It is an ancient and honourable stock, the Monypennies,' said Sir Mungo Malagrowth; 'the only loss is, there are sae few of the name.'

'The family seems to increase among your countrymen, Sir Mungo,' said Master Lowestoffe, whom Lord Glenvarloch had invited to be present, 'since his Majesty's happy accession brought so many of you here.'

'Right, sir — right,' said Sir Mungo, nodding and looking at George Heriot; 'there have some of ourselves been the better of that great blessing to the English nation.'

As he spoke, the door flew open, and in entered, to the astonishment of Lord Glenvarloch, his late serving-man, Richie Moniplies, now sumptuously, nay, gorgeously, attired in a superb brocaded suit, and leading in his hand the tall, thin, withered, somewhat distorted form of Martha Trapbois, arrayed in a complete dress of black velvet, which suited so strangely with the pallid and severe melancholy of her countenance, that the King himself exclaimed, in some perturbation, 'What the deil has the fallow brought us here? Body of our regal selves! it is a corpse that has run off with the mort-cloth!'

'May I sifflicate your Majesty to be gracious unto her?' said Richie; 'being that she is, in respect of this morning's wark, my ain wedded wife, Mrs. Martha Moniplies by name.'

'Saul of our body, man! but she looks wondrous grim,' answered King James. 'Art thou sure she has not been in her time maid of honour to Queen Mary, our kinswoman, of red-hot memory?'

'I am sure, an it like your Majesty, that she has brought me fifty thousand pounds of good siller, and better; and that has enabled me to pleasure your Majesty and other folk.'

'Ye need have said naething about that, man,' said the King; 'we ken our obligations in that sma' matter, and we are glad this rudas spouse of thine hath bestowed her treasure on ane wha kens to put it to the profit of his King and country. But how the deil did ye come by her, man?'

'In the auld Scottish fashion, my liege. She is the captive of my bow and my spear,' answered Moniplies. 'There was a convention that she should wed me when I avenged her father's death; so I slew and took possession.'

'It is the daughter of old Trapbois, who has been missed so long,' said Lowestoffe. 'Where the devil could you mew her up so closely, friend Richie?'

'Master Richard, if it be your will,' answered Richie; 'or

Master Richard Moniplies, if you like it better. For mewing of her up, I found her a shelter, in all honour and safety, under the roof of an honest countryman of my own ; and for secrecy, it was a point of prudence, when wantons like you were abroad, Master Lowestoffe.'

There was a laugh at Richie's magnanimous reply, on the part of every one but his bride, who made to him a signal of impatience, and said, with her usual brevity and sternness, 'Peace—peace—I pray you, peace. Let us do that which we came for.' So saying, she took out a bundle of parchments, and delivering them to Lord Glenvarloch, she said aloud—'I take this royal presence, and all here, to witness, that I restore the ransomed lordship of Glenvarloch to the right owner, as free as ever it was held by any of his ancestors.'

'I witnessed the redemption of the mortgage,' said Lowestoffe ; 'but I little dreamt by whom it had been redeemed.'

'No need ye should,' said Richie ; 'there would have been small wisdom in crying roast-meat.'

'Peace,' said his bride, 'once more. This paper,' she continued, delivering another to Lord Glenvarloch, 'is also your property ; take it, but spare me the question how it came into my custody.'

The King had hustled forward beside Lord Glenvarloch, and fixing an eager eye on the writing, exclaimed—'Body of ourselves, it is our royal sign-manual for the money which was so long out of sight ! How came you by it, Mistress Bride ?'

'It is a secret,' said Martha, drily.

'A secret which my tongue shall never utter,' said Richie, resolutely, 'unless the King commands me on my allegiance.'

'I do—I do command you,' said James, trembling and stammering with the impatient curiosity of a gossip ; while Sir Mungo, with more malicious anxiety to get at the bottom of the mystery, stooped his long thin form forward like a bent fishing-rod, raised his thin grey locks from his ear, and curved his hand behind it to collect every vibration of the expected intelligence. Martha, in the meantime, frowned most ominously on Richie, who went on undauntedly to inform the King, 'That his deceased father-in-law, a good careful man in the main, had a touch of worldly wisdom about him, that at times marred the uprightness of his walk : he liked to dabble among his neighbour's gear, and some of it would at times stick to his fingers in the handling.'

'For shame, man—for shame !' said Martha ; 'since the

infamy of the deed must be told, be it at least briefly. Yes, my lord,' she added, addressing Glenvarloch, 'the piece of gold was not the sole bait which brought the miserable old man to your chamber that dreadful night: his object, and he accomplished it, was to purloin this paper. The wretched scrivener was with him that morning, and, I doubt not, urged the doting old man to this villainy, to offer another bar to the ransom of your estate. If there was a yet more powerful agent at the bottom of the conspiracy, God forgive it to him at this moment, for he is now where the crime must be answered!'

'Amen!' said Lord Glenvarloch, and it was echoed by all present.

'For my father,' continued she, with her stern features twitched by an involuntary and convulsive movement, 'his guilt and folly cost him his life; and my belief is constant, that the wretch who counselled him that morning to purloin the paper left open the window for the entrance of the murderers.'

Everybody was silent for an instant; the King was first to speak, commanding search instantly to be made for the guilty scrivener. '*I, lictor,*' he concluded, '*colliga manus, caput obnubito, infelici suspendite arbori.*'

Lowestoffe answered with due respect, that the scrivener had absconded at the time of Lord Dalgarno's murder, and had not been heard of since.

'Let him be sought for,' said the King. 'And now let us change the discourse; these stories make one's very blood grow,¹ and are altogether unfit for bridal festivity. Hymen, O Hymenee!' added he, snapping his fingers. 'Lord Glenvarloch, what say you to Mistress Moniplies, this bonny bride, that has brought you back your father's estate on your bridal day?'

'Let him say nothing, my liege,' said Martha; 'that will best suit his feelings and mine.'

'There is redemption-money, at the least, to be repaid,' said Lord Glenvarloch; 'in that I cannot remain debtor.'

'We will speak of it hereafter,' said Martha; '*my debtor you cannot be.*' And she shut her mouth as if determined to say nothing more on the subject.

Sir Mungo, however, resolved not to part with the topic, and availing himself of the freedom of the moment, said to Richie—'A queer story that of your father-in-law, honest man; methinks your bride thanked you little for ripping it up.'

'I make it a rule, Sir Mungo,' replied Richie, 'always to

¹ Thrill or curdle.

‘speak any evil I know about my family myself, having observed, that if I do not, it is sure to be told by ither folks.’

‘But, Richie,’ said Sir Mungo, ‘it seems to me that this bride of yours is like to be master and mair in the conjugal state.’

‘If she abides by words, Sir Mungo,’ answered Richie, ‘I thank Heaven I can be as deaf as any one; and if she comes to dunts, I have twa hands to paik her with.’

‘Weel said, Richie, again,’ said the King; ‘you have gotten it on baith haffits, Sir Mungo. Troth, Mistress Bride, for a fule, your gudeman has a pretty turn of wit.’

‘There are fools, sire,’ replied she, ‘who have wit, and fools who have courage — ay, and fools who have learning and are great fools notwithstanding. I chose this man because he was my protector when I was desolate, and neither for his wit nor his wisdom. He is truly honest, and has a heart and hand that make amends for some folly. Since I was condemned to seek a protector through the world, which is to me a wilderness, I may thank God that I have come by no worse.’

‘And that is sae sensibly said,’ replied the King, ‘that, by my saul, I’ll try whether I canna make him better. Kneel down, Richie; somebody lend me a rapier — yours, Mr. Langstaff — that’s a brave name for a lawyer! Ye need not flash it out that gate, Templar fashion, as if ye were about to pink a bailiff!’

He took the drawn sword, and with averted eyes, for it was a sight he loved not to look on, endeavoured to lay it on Richie’s shoulder, but nearly stuck it into his eye. Richie, starting back, attempted to rise, but was held down by Lowestoffe, while Sir Mungo guiding the royal weapon, the honour-bestowing blow was given and received. ‘*Surge, carnifex.* Rise up, Sir Richard Moniplies of Castle Collop! And, my lords and lieges, let us all to our dinner, for the cock-a-leekie is cooling.’



NOTES TO THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL

NOTE 1. — GEORGE HERIOT'S HOSPITAL, p. vii

AFTER Heriot's death in 1624, the site originally designed for the hospital at the foot of Gray's Close, Cowgate, not far from the old mint, consisted of houses which belonged to Heriot, and which he bequeathed to his executors for that purpose. In June 1627, when Dr. Balcanquhall, Dean of Rochester, came to Edinburgh to make arrangements for carrying Heriot's intentions into effect, of founding 'so great a work,' it was concluded that this site was quite ineligible; and, fortunately, the provost and council agreed to transfer certain acres, which they had recently purchased, known as the High Riggs, to the south of the Grassmarket, for the proposed building, and William Wallace, the king's master-mason, was appointed to superintend the work. On the 1st of July 1628, after a sermon, the ground-stone was laid. Wallace did not live to complete the building, having died in October 1631. That the present quadrangular building was actually designed by him is clear from the minutes of the governors, and the various items of the treasurer's accounts, from the day when the usual drink-money was paid for laying the foundation to Wallace and his workmen, with the sums they received from week to week. A good deal of useless discussion has taken place in regard to the architect: 1. Dean Balcanquhall on this head is said to have brought with him a design by Inigo Jones; 2. the dean himself has been named, he having furnished, not the pattern of the building, but the statutes, in 1627, for the government of the hospital; and 3. William Aytoun, junior, appointed master-mason as successor to Wallace, 1631-32, has also been lauded, but without the slightest evidence in either of these cases to deprive Wallace of the honour. The governors voted a sum to Wallace's widow, in consideration of his extraordinary pains at the beginning thereof, 'UPON THE MODELL AND FRAME THAIROF.' Aytoun was likewise expressly enjoined 'to prosecute and follow forth THE MODELL, FRAME, AND BUILDING OF THE SAID WARK as the same is already begun.' Aytoun, who died in 1640, was succeeded as master-mason by John Mylne, but the want of funds prevented the hospital being completed with a handsome spire, as exhibited in an old engraving, about 1646, while the building was still in progress. — See the Rev. Dr. Steven's *History of the Hospital*, edited by Dr. Bedford, 1859, and extracts in a paper, 'Who was the Architect of Heriot's Hospital?' in the *Transactions of the Architectural Institute of Scotland*, sess 1851-52, p. 13 (*Laing*).

NOTE 2. — DEBAUCHERY OF THE PERIOD, p. xi

Harrington's *Nugæ Antiquæ*, vol. ii. pp. 129, 130 [ed. 1779]. For the gross debauchery of the period, too much encouraged by the example of the monarch, who was, in other respects, neither without talent nor a good-natured disposition, see Winwood's *Memorials*, Howel's *Letters*, and other memorials of the time; but particularly consult the *Private Letters and*

Correspondence of Steenie, alias Buckingham, with his reverend Dad and Gossip, King James, which abound with the grossest as well as the most childish language. The learned Mr. D'Israeli, in an attempt to vindicate the character of James, has only succeeded in obtaining for himself the character of a skilful and ingenious advocate, without much advantage to his royal client.

NOTE 3. — ALSATION CHARACTERS, p. xii

'*Cheatly*, a rascal, who, by reason of debts, dares not stir out of Whitefriars, but there inveigles young heirs in tail, and helps them to goods and money upon great disadvantages, is bound for them, and shares with them till he undoes them. A lewd, impudent, debauched fellow, very expert in the cant about the town.

'*Shamwell*, cousin to the Belfonds, an heir, who, being ruined by Cheatly, is made a decoy-duck for others, not daring to stir out of Alsatia, where he lives. Is bound with Cheatly for heirs, and lives upon them a dissolute, debauched life.

'*Captain Hackum*, a block-headed bully of Alsatia, a cowardly, impudent, blustering fellow, formerly a sergeant in Flanders, run from his colours, retreated into Whitefriars for a very small debt, where by the Alsatians he is dubb'd a captain, marries one that lets lodgings, sells cherry-brandy, and is a bawd.

'*Scrapeall*, a hypocritical, repeating, praying, psalm-singing, precise fellow, pretending to great piety; a godly knave, who joins with Cheatly, and supplies young heirs with goods and money.'—*Dramatis Personæ* to the *Squire of Alsatia*, Shadwell's *Works*, vol. iv.

NOTE 4. — DAVID RAMSAY, p. 2

David Ramsay, watchmaker and horologer to James I., was a real person, though the Author has taken the liberty of pressing him into the service of fiction. Although his profession led him to cultivate the exact sciences, like many at this period he mingled them with pursuits which were mystical and fantastic. The truth was, that the boundaries between truth and falsehood in mathematics, astronomy, and similar pursuits were not exactly known, and there existed a sort of *terra incognita* between them, in which the wisest men bewildered themselves. David Ramsay risked his money on the success of the vaticinations which his researches led him to form, since he sold clocks and watches under condition that their value should not become payable till King James was crowned in the Pope's chair at Rome. Such wagers were common in that day, as may be seen by looking at Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour*.

David Ramsay was also an actor in another singular scene, in which the notorious astrologer Lilly was a performer, and had no small expectation on the occasion, since he brought with him a half-quartern sack to put the treasure in.

David Ramsay, his Majesty's clock-maker, had been informed that there was a great quantity of treasure buried in the cloister of Westminster Abbey. He acquaints Dean Williams therewith, who was also then Bishop of Lincoln. The dean gave him liberty to search after it, with this proviso, that if any was discovered, his church should have a share of it. Davy Ramsay finds out one John Scott, who pretended the use of the Mosalcal rods,¹ to assist him herein. I was desired to join with him, unto which I consented. One winter's night, Davy Ramsay, with several gentlemen, myself, and Scott, entered the cloisters. We played the hazel rod round about the cloister. Upon the west side of the cloisters the rods turned one over another, an argument that the treasure was there. The labourers digged at least six foot deep, and then we met with a

¹ The same now called, I believe, the divining-rod, and applied to the discovery of water not obvious to the eye.

coffin; but [which], in regard it was not heavy, we did not open, which we afterwards much repented.

From the cloisters we went into the abbey church, where, upon a sudden (there being no wind when we began), so fierce, so high, so blustering and loud a wind did rise, that we verily believed the west end of the church would have fallen upon us. Our rods would not move at all; the candles and torches, all but one, were extinguished, or burned very dimly. John Scott, my partner, was amazed, looked pale, knew not what to think or do, until I gave directions and command to dismiss the daemons; which, when done, all was quiet again, and each man returned unto his lodging late, about twelve o'clock at night. I could never since be induced to join with any in such like actions.

The true miscarriage of the business was by reason of so many people being present at the operation; for there was above thirty, some laughing, others deriding us; so that, if we had not dismissed the daemons, I believe most part of the abbey church had been blown down. Secrecy and intelligent operators, with a strong confidence and knowledge of what they are doing, are best for this work. — *Lilly's Life and Times*, pp. 32, 33 [ed. 1715].

David Ramsay had a son called William Ramsay, who appears to have possessed all his father's credulity. He became an astrologer, and in 1651-52 published *Vox Stellarum, an Introduction to the Judgment of Eclipses and the Annual Revolutions of the World*. The edition of 1652 is inscribed to his father. It would appear, as indeed it might be argued from his mode of disposing of his goods, that the old horologer had omitted to make hay while the sun shone; for his son, in his dedication, has this exception to the paternal virtues, 'It's true your carelessness in laying up while the sun shone for the tempests of a stormy day hath given occasion to some inferior-spirited people not to value you according to what you are by nature and in yourself, for such look not to a man longer than he is in prosperity, esteeming none but for their wealth, not wisdom, power, nor virtue.' From these expressions, it is to be apprehended that while old David Ramsay, a follower of the Stewarts, sunk under the Parliamentary government, his son, William, had advanced from being a dupe to astrology to the dignity of being himself a cheat.

NOTE 5. — GEORGE HERIOT, p. 23

This excellent person was but little known by his actions when alive, but we may well use, in this particular, the striking phrase of Scripture, 'that being dead he yet speaketh.' We have already mentioned, in the Introduction, the splendid charity of which he was the founder; the few notices of his personal history are slight and meagre.

George Heriot was born at Trabroun, in the parish of Gladsmuir; he was the eldest son of a goldsmith in Edinburgh, descended from a family of some consequence in East Lothian. His father enjoyed the confidence of his fellow-citizens, and was their representative in Parliament. He was, besides, one of the deputies sent by the inhabitants of the city to propitiate the King, when he had left Edinburgh abruptly, after the riot of 17th December 1596.

George Heriot, the son, pursued his father's occupation of a goldsmith, then peculiarly lucrative, and much connected with that of a money-broker. He enjoyed the favour and protection of James, and of his consort, Anne of Denmark. He married, for his first wife, a maiden of his own rank named Christian Marjoribanks, daughter of a respectable burgher. This was in 1586. He was afterwards named Jeweller to the Queen, whose account to him for a space of ten years amounted to nearly £40,000. George Heriot, having lost his wife, connected himself with the distinguished house of Rosebery, by marrying a daughter of James Primrose, clerk to the privy council. Of this lady he was deprived by her dying in childbirth in 1612, before attaining her twenty-first year. After a life spent in honourable and successful industry, George Heriot died in London, to which city he had followed his royal master, on the 12th February 1624, at the age of sixty-one years. His picture (copied by Scougall from a lost original), in which he is represented in the

prime of life, is thus described: 'His fair hair, that overshades the thoughtful brow and calm calculating eye, with the cast of humour on the lower part of the countenance, are all indicative of the genuine Scottish character, and well distinguish a person fitted to move steadily and wisely through the world, with a strength of resolution to ensure success, and a disposition to enjoy it.'—*Historical and Descriptive Account of Heriot's Hospital, with a Memoir of the Founder*, by Messrs. James and John Johnstone. Edinburgh, 1827.

I may add, as everything concerning George Heriot is interesting, that his second wife, Alison Primrose, was interred in St. Gregory's church, from the register of which parish the Rev. Mr. Barham, rector, has, in the kindest manner, sent me the following extract:—'Mrs. Alison, the wife of Mr. George Heriot, gentleman, 20th April 1612.' St. Gregory's, before the Great Fire of London which consumed the cathedral, formed one of the towers of old St. Paul's, and occupied the space of ground now filled by Queen Anne's statue. In the south aisle of the choir Mrs. Heriot reposed under a handsome monument, bearing the following inscription:—

'Sanctissimæ et charissimæ conjugi ALISONÆ HERIOT, Jacobi Primrosii, Regiæ Majestatis in Sanctiori Concilio Regni Scotiæ Amanuensis, filiæ, femina omnibus tum animi tum corporis dotibus ac pio cultu instructissimæ, mœstissimus ipsius maritus GEORGIUS HERIOT, armiger, Regis, Reginæ, Principum Henrici et Caroli Gemmarius, bene merenti, non sine lachrymis, hoc Monumentum pie posuit.

'Obiit Mensis Aprilis die 16, anno salut. MDCXII, ætatis 20, in ipso flore juventæ, et mihi, parentibus, amicis tristissimum sui desiderium reliquit.

Hic Alicis Primrosa
Jacet crudo obruta fato,
Intempestivas
Ut rosa passa manus.
Nondum bis denos
Annorum impleverat orbes,
Pulchra, pudica,
Patris delictum atq: viri:
Quum grāvīda, heu! nunquam
Mater, discessit, et inde
Cura dolorq: patri,
Cura dolorq: viro.
Non sublata tamen,
Tantum translata, recessit;
Nunc Rosa prima Poli
Quæ fuit ante soli.'

The loss of a young, beautiful, and amiable partner at a period so interesting was the probable reason of her husband devoting his fortune to a charitable institution. The epitaph occurs in Strype's edition of Stow's *Survey of London*, Book iii. p. 228.

NOTE 6.—COUNTERBLAST, p. 25

A *Counterblast to Tobacco* is included in the works of King James, Lond. 1616, published by James (Montague), Bishop of Winchester. In the Bishop's Latin translation of the King's *Works*, Lond. 1619, the tract has this pedantic title, *Misocapnus, sive de Abusu Tobacchi, Lusus Regius* (Laing).

NOTE 7.—JAMES'S LOVE OF FLATTERY, p. 33

I am certain this prudential advice is not original on Mr. Linklater's part, but I am not at present able to produce my authority. I think it

amounted to this, that James flung down a petition presented by some supplicant who paid no compliments to his horse and expressed no admiration at the splendour of his furniture, saying, 'Shall a king cumber himself about the petition of a beggar, while the beggar disregards the king's splendour?' It is, I think, Sir John Harrington who recommends, as a sure mode to the king's favour, to praise the paces of the royal palfrey.

NOTE 8. — PROCLAMATION AGAINST THE SCOTS, p. 35

The English agreed in nothing more unanimously than in censuring James on account of the beggarly rabble which not only attended the King 'at his coming first out of Scotland, but,' says Osborne, 'through his whole reign, like a fluent spring, were found still crossing the river of Tweed.' Yet it is certain, from the number of proclamations published by the privy council in Scotland, and bearing marks of the King's own diction, that he was sensible of the whole inconveniences and unpopularity attending the importunate crowd of disresponsible suitors, and as desirous to get rid of them as his Southern subjects could be. But it was in vain that his Majesty argued with his Scottish subjects on the disrespect they were bringing on their native country and sovereign, by causing the English to suppose there were no well-nurtured or independent gentry in Scotland, they who presented themselves being, in the opinion and conceit of all beholders, 'but idle rascals, and poor miserable bodies.' It was even in vain that the vessels which brought up this unwelcome cargo of petitioners were threatened with fine and confiscation: the undaunted suitors continued to press forward, and, as one of the proclamations says, many of them under pretence of requiring payment of 'auld debts due to them by the King,' which, it is observed with great naïveté, 'is, of all kinds of importunity, most displeasing to his Majesty.' The expressions in the text are selected from these curious proclamations.

NOTE 9. — GILL'S COMMENTARY, p. 53

A biblical commentary by Gill, which (if the Author's memory serves him) occupies between five and six hundred printed quarto pages, and must therefore have filled more pages of manuscript than the number mentioned in the text, has this quatrain at the end of the volume —

With one good pen I wrote this book,
Made of a grey goose quill;
A pen it was when it I took,
And a pen I leave it still.

NOTE 10. — WHITEHALL, p. 55

Whitehall, originally the residence of the Archbishops of York, was, on the fall of Wolsey, appropriated by King Henry VIII., who employed Holbein to make several additions to the building.

A disastrous fire, however, in 1691, and another six years later, consumed all but the banqueting-house (*Laing*).

NOTE 11. — KING JAMES, p. 57

The dress of this monarch, together with his personal appearance, is thus described by a contemporary: —

He was of a middle stature, more corpulent through [*i. e.* by means of] his clothes than in his body, yet fat enough. . . . His legs were very weak, having had, as was thought,

some foul play in his youth, or rather before he was born, that he was not able to stand at seven years of age. That weakness made him ever leaning on other men's shoulders. His walk was ever circular; his fingers ever in that walk fiddling about—[a part of dress now laid aside]. . . . He would make a great deal too bold with God in his passion, both in cursing and swearing, and on strain higher verging on blasphemy; but would in his better temper say, he hoped God would not impute them as sins, and lay them to his charge, seeing they proceeded from passion. He had need of great assurance, rather than hopes, that would make daily so bold with God.—Dalzell's *Sketches of Scottish History*, pp. 84-87.

NOTE 12.—SIR MUNGO MALAGROWTHER, p. 77

It will perhaps be recognised by some of my countrymen, that the caustic Scottish knight, as described in chapter vi., borrowed some of his attributes from a most worthy and respectable baronet, who was to be met with in Edinburgh society about twenty-five or thirty years ago. It is not by any means to be inferred that the living person resembled the imaginary one in the course of life ascribed to him, or in his personal attributes. But his fortune was little adequate to his rank and the antiquity of his family; and to avenge himself of this disparity, the worthy baronet lost no opportunity of making the more avowed sons of fortune feel the edge of his satire. This he had the art of disguising under the personal infirmity of deafness, and usually introduced his most severe things by an affected mistake of what was said around him. For example, at a public meeting of a certain county, this worthy gentleman had chosen to display a laced coat, of such a pattern as had not been seen in society for the better part of a century. The young men who were present amused themselves with rallying him on his taste, when he suddenly singled out one of the party—'Auld d'ye think my coat—auld-fashioned? Indeed, it canna be new; but it was the wark of a braw tailor, and that was your grandfather, who was at the head of the trade in Edinburgh about the beginning of last century.' Upon another occasion, when this type of Sir Mungo Malagrowther happened to hear a nobleman, the high chief of one of those Border clans who were accused of paying very little attention in ancient times to the distinctions of *meum* and *tuum*, addressing a gentleman of the same name, as if conjecturing there should be some relationship between them, he volunteered to ascertain the nature of the connexion by saying, that the 'chief's ancestors had *stolen* the cows, and the other gentleman's ancestors had *killed* them,'—fame ascribing the origin of the latter family to a butcher. It may be well imagined that, among a people that have been always punctilious about genealogy, such a person, who had a general acquaintance with all the flaws and specks in the shields of the proud, the pretending, and the *nouveaux riches*, must have had the same scope for amusement as a monkey in a china shop.

NOTE 13.—EARL OF DALWOLSEY, p. 97

The head of the ancient and distinguished house of Ramsay, and to whom, as their chief, the individuals of that name look as their origin and source of gentry. Allan Ramsay, the pastoral poet, in the same manner, makes

Dalhousie of an auld descent,
My chief, my stoup, my ornament.

NOTE 14.—MRS. ANNE TURNER, p. 97

Mrs. Anne Turner was a dame somewhat of the occupation of Mrs. Suddelchop in the text—that is, half-milliner, half-procuress, and secret agent in all manner of proceedings. She was a trafficker in the poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury, for which so many subordinate agents lost their lives, while, to the great scandal of justice, the Earl of Somerset and his countess

were suffered to escape, upon a threat of Somerset to make public some secret which nearly affected his master, King James. Mrs. Turner introduced into England a French custom of using yellow starch in 'getting up' bands and cuffs, and, by Lord Coke's orders, she appeared in that fashion at the place of execution. She was the widow of a physician, and had been eminently beautiful, as appears from the description of her in the poem called *Overbury's Vision*. There was produced in court a parcel of dolls or puppets belonging to this lady, some naked, some dressed, and which she used for exhibiting fashions upon. But, greatly to the horror of the spectators, who accounted these figures to be magical devices, there was, on their being shown, 'heard a crack from the scaffolds, which caused great fear, tumult, and confusion among the spectators and throughout the hall, every one fearing hurt, as if the devil had been present, and grown angry to have his workmanship showed by such as were not his own scholars.' Compare this curious passage in the *History of King James for the First Fourteen Years*, 1651 [in vol. ii. p. 332 of Somers's *Tracts*, ed. 1809], with the *Aulicus Coquinarius* of Dr. Heylin. The latter is published in the *Secret History of the Court of James the First* [vol. ii. ed. 1811].

NOTE 15. — LORD HUNTINGLEN, p. 110

The credit of having rescued James I. from the dagger of Alexander Ruthven is here fictitiously ascribed to an imaginary Lord Huntinglen. In reality, as may be read in every history, his preserver was John Ramsay, afterwards created Earl of Holderness, who stabbed the younger Ruthven with his dagger while he was struggling with the King. Sir Anthony Weldon informs us that, upon the annual return of the day, the King's deliverance was commemorated by an anniversary feast. The time was the 5th of August, 'upon which,' proceeds the satirical historian, 'Sir John Ramsay, for his good service in that preservation, was the principal guest, and so did the King grant him any boon he would ask that day; but had such limitations set to his asking as made his suit unprofitable unto him as that he asked it for was unserviceable to the King' [*Court of King James*, vol. ii. p. 321].

NOTE 16. — BUCKINGHAM, p. 114

Buckingham, who had a frankness in his high and irascible ambition, was always ready to bid defiance to those by whom he was thwarted or opposed. He aspired to be created Prince of Tipperary in Ireland, and Lord High Constable of England. Coventry, then Lord Keeper, opposed what seemed such an unreasonable extent of power as was annexed to the office of constable. On this opposition, according to Sir Anthony Weldon, 'the Duke peremptorily accosted Coventry, "Who made you, Coventry, Lord Keeper?" He replied, "The King." Buckingham sur-replied, "It's false; 'twas I did make you, and you shall know that I, who made you, can, and will, unmake you." Coventry thus answered him, "Did I conceive I held my place by your favour, I would presently unmake myself by rendering the seal to his Majesty." Then Buckingham, in a scorn and fury, flung from him, saying, "You shall not keep it long"; and surely, had not Felton prevented him, he had made good his word.'—Weldon's *Court of King James and Charles* [vol. ii. p. 32, ed. 1811].

NOTE 17. — DOUGLAS WARS, p. 126

The cruel civil wars waged by the Scottish barons during the minority of James VI. had this name from the figure made in them by the celebrated James Douglas, Earl of Morton. Both sides executed their prisoners without mercy or favour.

NOTE 18. — PAGES, p. 134

About this time the ancient customs arising from the long prevalence of chivalry began to be grossly varied from the original purposes of the institution. None was more remarkable than the change which took place in the breeding and occupation of pages. This peculiar species of menial originally consisted of youths of noble birth, who, that they might be trained to the exercise of arms, were early removed from their paternal homes, where too much indulgence might have been expected, to be placed in the family of some prince or man of rank and military renown, where they served, as it were, an apprenticeship to the duties of chivalry and courtesy. Their education was severely moral, and pursued with great strictness in respect to useful exercises, and what were deemed elegant accomplishments. From being pages, they were advanced to the next gradation of squires; from squires, these candidates for the honours of knighthood were frequently made knights.

But in the 16th century the page had become, in many instances, a mere domestic, who sometimes, by the splendour of his address and appearance, was expected to make up in show for the absence of a whole band of retainers with swords and bucklers. We have Sir John's authority when he cashiers part of his train.

Falstaff will learn the humour of the age,
French thrift, you rogues, myself and skirted page.

Jonson, in a high tone of moral indignation, thus reprobated the change. The host of the *New Inn* replies to Lord Lovel, who asks to have his son for a page, that he would, with his own hands, hang him sooner

Than damn him to that desperate course of life.

Lovel. Call you that desperate, which, by a line
Of institution, from our ancestors
Hath been derived down to us, and received
In a succession for the noblest way
Of breeding up our youth, in letters, arms,
Fair mien, discourses, civil exercise,
And all the blazon of a gentleman?
Where can he learn to vault, to ride, to fence,
To move his body gracefuller, to speak
His language purer, or to tune his mind
Or manners more to the harmony of nature,
Than in these nurseries of nobility?

Host. Ay, that was when the nursery's self was noble,
And only virtue made it, not the market,
That titles were not vended at the drum
Or common outcry. Goodness gave the greatness,
And greatness worship. Every house became
An academy of honour, and those parts
We see departed in the practice now
Quite from the institution.

Lovel. Why do you say so,
Or think so enviously? do they not still
Learn there the Centaur's skill, the art of Thrace,
To ride? or Pollux' mystery, to fence?
The Pyrrhick gestures, both to dance and spring
In armour, to be active for the wars;
To study figures, numbers, and proportions,
May yield them great in counsels and the arts
Grave Nestor and the wise Ulysses practised,
To make their English sweet upon their tongue?
As reverend Chaucer says.

Host. Sir, you mistake.
To play Sir Pandarus, my copy hath it,
And carry messages to Madam Cressid;
Instead of backing the brave steed o' mornings,

To [kiss] the chambermaid, and for a leap
 O' the vaulting horse, to ply the vaulting-house;
 For exercise of arms a bale of dice,
 Or two or three packs of cards to show the cheat
 And nimbleness of hand; mis-take a cloak
 From my lord's back, and pawn it; ease his pockets
 Of a superfluous watch, or geld a jewel
 Of an odd stone or so; twinge three or four buttons
 From off my lady's gown:—these are the arts,
 Or seven liberal deadly sciences,
 Of pagery, or rather paganism,
 As the tides run; to which, if he apply him,
 He may, perhaps, take a degree at Tyburn.
 A year the earlier, come to read a lecture
 Upon Aquinas at St. Thomas-a-Watering's,
 And so go forth a laureate in hemp circle.

The New Inn, Act I. sc. 1.

NOTE 19. — LORD HENRY HOWARD, p. 136

Lord Henry Howard was the second son of the poetical Earl of Surrey, and possessed considerable parts and learning. He wrote, in the year 1583, a book called *A Defensative [Preservative] against the Poison of Supposed Prophecies*. He gained the favour of Queen Elizabeth, by having, he says, directed his battery against a sect of prophets and pretended soothsayers, whom he accounted *infesti regibus*, as he expresses it. In the last years of the Queen he became James's most ardent partizan, and conducted with great pedantry, but much intrigue, the correspondence betwixt the Scottish king and the younger Cecil. Upon James's accession, he was created Earl of Northampton and Lord Privy Seal. According to De Beaumont, the French ambassador, Lord Henry Howard was one of the greatest flatterers and calumniators that ever lived.

NOTE 20. — SKIRMISHES IN THE PUBLIC STREETS, p. 137

Edinburgh appears to have been one of the most disorderly towns in Europe during the 16th and beginning of the 17th century. The *Diary* of the honest citizen Birrell repeatedly records such incidents as the following: 'The 24 of November [1567], at two afternoon, the Laird of Airth and the Laird of Weems met on the High Gate of Edinburgh, and they and their followers fought a very bloody skirmish, where there were many hurt on both sides with shot of pistol.' These skirmishes also took place in London itself. In Shadwell's play of *The Scourers*, an old rake thus boasts of his early exploits: 'I knew the Hectors, and before them the Muns, and the Tityretu's; they were brave fellows indeed! In those days a man could not go from the Rose Tavern to the Piazza once, but he must venture his life twice, my dear Sir Willy' [Act I. sc. 1]. But it appears that the affrays, which in the Scottish capital arose out of hereditary quarrels and ancient feuds, were in London the growth of the licentiousness and arrogance of young debauchees.

NOTE 21. — FRENCH COOKERY, p. 145

The exertion of French ingenuity mentioned in the text is noticed by some authorities of the period; the siege of Leith was also distinguished by the protracted obstinacy of the besieged, in which was displayed all that the age possessed of defensive war, so that Brantome records that those who witnessed this siege had, from that very circumstance, a degree of consequence yielded to their persons and opinions. He tells a story of Strozzi himself, from which it appears that his jests lay a good deal in the line of the *cuisine*. He caused a mule to be stolen from one Brusquet, on

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And carry messages to Madam Cressid;
Instead of backing the brave steed o' mornings,

Where he mistook a player for a king,
For when he would have said, 'King Richard died,
And call'd, a horse! a horse!' he 'Burbage' cried.

RICHARD CORBET's *Poems*, Edition 1815, p. 193.

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The condition of men of wit and talents was never more melancholy than about this period. Their lives were so irregular, and their means of living so precarious, that they were alternately rioting in debauchery or encountering and struggling with the meanest necessities. Two or three lost their lives by a surfelt brought on by that fatal banquet of Rhenish wine and pickled herrings, which is familiar to those who study the lighter literature of that age. The whole history is a most melancholy picture of genius degraded at once by its own debaucheries and the patronage of heartless rakes and profligates.

NOTE 25. — DUCAL REGISTER OF ALSATIA, p. 202

This curious register is still in existence, being in possession of that eminent antiquary Dr. Dryasdust, who liberally offered the Author permission to have the autograph of Duke Hildebrod engraved as an illustration of this passage. Unhappily, being rigorous as Ritson himself in adhering to the very letter of his copy, the worthy doctor clogged his munificence with the condition that we should adopt the duke's orthography, and entitle the work *The Fortunes of Niggle*, with which stipulation we did not think it necessary to comply.

NOTE 26. — EARL OF BOTHWELL, p. 230

Among the original documents preserved among the archives of the hospital, there are various precepts or receipts signed by Francis (Stewart) Earl of Bothwell, but only one of them dated, 1594, which show that George Heriot and he had many transactions. In that year Bothwell broke out in rebellion, and, abandoned by Queen Elizabeth, excommunicated by the church, and deserted by his followers, he was obliged to fly for safety to France, and thence to Spain, where he renounced the Protestant faith, and lived for many years in obscurity and immorality. Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch, his stepson, succeeded to his large estates, which had been conveyed to him by the earl before his treasonable attempts and forfeiture (*Laing*).

NOTE 27. — THE SKIMMINGTON, p. 247

A species of triumphal procession in honour of female supremacy, when it rose to such a height as to attract the attention of the neighbourhood. It is described at full length in *Hudibras* (Part II. Canto II.). As the procession passed on, those who attended it in an official capacity were wont to sweep the threshold of the houses in which fame affirmed the mistresses to exercise paramount authority, which was given and received as a hint that their inmates might, in their turn, be made the subject of a similar ovation. The Skimmington, which in some degree resembled the proceedings of Mumbo Jumbo in an African village, has been long discontinued in England, apparently because female rule has become either milder or less frequent than among our ancestors.

NOTE 28. — THE MARSHALSEA, p. 265

This penitentiary was under the control of the Royal Knight Marshal, whose jurisdiction extended twelve miles round Whitehall, the city of London excepted. It stood near St. George's church in the Borough (*Laing*).

whom he wished to play a trick, and served up the flesh of that unclean animal so well disguised that it passed with Brusquet for venison.

NOTE 22. — CUCKOO'S NEST, p. 146

The quarrel in chapter xli. between the pretended captain and the citizen of London is taken from a burlesque poem called *The Counter Scuffle*, that is, the scuffle in the prison at Wood Street, so called. It is a piece of low humour, which had at the time very considerable vogue. The prisoners, it seems, had fallen into a dispute amongst themselves 'which calling was of most repute,' and a lawyer put in his claim to be most highly considered. The man of war repelled his pretence with much arrogance.

'Wer't not for us, thou swad,' quoth he,
'Where wouldest thou fog to get a fee?
But to defend such things as thee
 'Tis pity;
For such as you esteem us least,
Who ever have been ready prest
To guard you and your cuckoo's nest,
 Your city.'

The offence is no sooner given than it is caught up by a gallant citizen, a goldsmith, named Ellis.

'Of London city I am free,
And there I first my wife did see,
And for that very cause,' quoth he,
 'I love it.
And he that calls it cuckoo's nest,
Except he says he speaks in jest,
He is a villain and a beast, —
 I'll prove it!

'For though I am a man of trade,
And free of London city made,
Yet can I use gun, bill, and blade,
 In battle.
And citizens, if need require,
Themselves can force the foe retire,
Whatever this Low Country squire
 May prattle.'

The dispute terminates in the scuffle, which is the subject of the poem. The whole may be found in the second edition of Dryden's *Miscellany*, 12mo, vol. iii. 1716.

NOTE 23. — BURBAGE, p. 151

Burbage, whom Camden terms another Roscius, was probably the original representative of Richard III., and seems to have been early almost identified with his prototype. Bishop Corbet, in his *Iter Boreale*, tells us that mine host of Market Bosworth was full of ale and history.

Hear him, 'See you yon wood? There Richard lay
With his whole army. Look the other way,
And lo, where Richmond, in a bed of gorse,
Encamp'd himself o'er-night and all his force.
Upon this hill they met.' Why, he could tell
The inch where Richmond stood, where Richard fell;
Besides, what of his knowledge he could say,
He had authentic notice from the play,
Which I might guess by's mustering up the ghosts
And policies not incident to hosts;
But chiefly by that one perspicuous thing,

Where he mistook a player for a king,
For when he would have said, 'King Richard died,
And call'd, a horse! a horse!' he 'Burbage' cried.

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NOTE 29. — *GOD'S REVENGE AGAINST MURDER*, p. 287

Only three copies are known to exist; one in the library at Kennaquhair, and two — one foxed and cropped, the other tall and in good condition — both in the possession of an eminent member of the Roxburghe Club. — Note by CAPTAIN CLUTTERBUCK. —

The work here referred to, *The Triumphs of God's Revenge against Murder, expressed in Thirty Tragical Histories*, by John Reynolds, passed through several editions between 1622 and 1753, besides abridgments. Its precursor, *The Theatre of God's Judgements*, by Thomas Beard, first appeared in 1597, 4to, and is remarkable in containing 'An Account of Christopher Marlowe and his 'Tragical End.' It reached a fourth and enlarged edition in 1648 (*Lainp*).

NOTE 30. — *SCOTS' DISLIKE TO PORK*, p. 320

The Scots, till within the last generation, disliked swine's flesh as an article of food as much as the Highlanders do at present. It was remarked as extraordinary rapacity, when the Border depredators condescended to make prey of the accursed race whom the fiend made his habitation. Ben Jonson, in drawing James's character, says, he loved 'no part of a swine.' [See also *Waverley*, Note 22, p. 476.]

NOTE 31. — *MHIC-ALLASTAR-MORE*, p. 330

This is the Highland patronymic of the late gallant Chief of Glengarry. The allusion in the text is to an unnecessary alarm taken by some lady at the ceremonial of the coronation of George IV., at the sight of the pistols which the chief wore as a part of his Highland dress. The circumstance produced some confusion, which was talked of at the time. All who knew Glengarry, and the Author knew him well, were aware that his principles were of devoted loyalty to the person of his sovereign.

NOTE 32. — *KING JAMES'S HUNTING-BOTTLE*, p. 330

Roger Coke, in his *Detection of the Court and State of England*, London, 1694, vol. i. p. 70, observes of James I. :

The King was excessively addicted to hunting and drinking, not ordinary French and Spanish wines, but strong Greek wines, and though he would divide his hunting from drinking these wines, yet he would compound his hunting with drinking these wines; and to that purpose, he was attended with a special officer, who was, as much as could be, always at hand to fill the King's cup in his hunting when he called for it. I have heard my father say that, being hunting with the King, after the King had drank of the wine, he also drank of it; and though he was young, and of a healthful constitution, it so disordered his head that it spoiled his pleasure and disordered him for three days after. Whether it were the drinking of these wines, or from some other cause, the King became so lazy and unwieldy that he was *treist* [trussed] on horseback, and as he was set, so would he ride, without otherwise poisoning himself on his saddle; nay, when his hat was set on his head, he would not take the pains to alter it, but it sat as it was put on.

The trussing, for which the demi-pique saddle of the day afforded particular facility, is alluded to in the text; and the Author, among other nicknacks of antiquity, possesses a leathern flask, like those carried by sportsmen, which is labelled 'King James's Hunting-Bottle,' with what authenticity is uncertain. Coke seems to have exaggerated the King's taste for the bottle. Weldon says James was not intemperate in his drinking :

However, in his old age, Buckingham's jovial suppers, when he had any turn to do with him, made him sometimes overtaken, which he would the very next day remember,

and repent with tears. It is true, he drank very often, which was rather out of a custom than any delight; and his drinks were of that kind for strength, as Frontiniack, Canary, high country wine, tent wine, and Scottish ale, that had he not had a very strong brain, might have been daily overtaken, although he seldom drank at any one time above four spoonfuls, many times not above one or two. — *Secret History of King James*, vol. ii. p. 3. Edin. 1811.

NOTE 33. — SCENE IN GREENWICH PARK, p. 332

I cannot here omit mentioning, that a painting of the old school is in existence, having a remarkable resemblance to the scene described in chapter xxvii., although it be nevertheless true that the similitude is in all respects casual, and that the Author knew not of the existence of the painting till it was sold, amongst others, with the following description attached to it in a well-drawn-up catalogue: —

FREDERIGO ZUCCHERO

Scene as represented in the *Fortunes of Nigel*, by Frederigo Zuccherò, the King's painter.

This extraordinary picture, which, independent of its pictorial merit, has been esteemed a great literary curiosity, represents most faithfully the meeting in Greenwich Park, between King James and Nigel Oliphant, as described in the *Fortunes of Nigel*, showing that the Author must have taken the anecdote from authenticated facts. In the centre of the picture sits King James on horseback, very erect and stiffly. Between the King and Prince Charles, who is on the left of the picture, the Duke of Buckingham is represented riding a black horse, and pointing eagerly towards the culprit, Nigel Oliphant, who is standing on the right side of the picture. He grasps with his right hand a gun, or cross-bow, and looks angrily towards the King, who seems somewhat confused and alarmed. Behind Nigel, his servant is restraining two dogs which are barking fiercely. Nigel and his servant are both clothed in red, the livery of the Oliphant family, in which, to this day, the town officers of Perth are clothed, there being an old charter granting to the Oliphant family the privilege of dressing the public officers of Perth in their livery. The Duke of Buckingham is in all respects equal in magnificence of dress to the King or the Prince. The only difference that is marked between him and royalty is, that his head is uncovered. The King and the Prince wear their hats. In Lucy Aikin's *Memoirs of the Reign [Court] of King James* will be found a letter from Sir Thomas Howard to Lord J. Harrington, in which he recommends the latter to come to court, mentioning that his Majesty has spoken favourably of him. He then proceeds to give him some advice, by which he is likely to find favour in the King's eyes. He tells him to wear a bushy ruff, well starched; and after various other directions as to his dress, he concludes, 'but, above all things, fail not to praise the roan jennet whereon the King doth daily ride.' In this picture King James is represented on the identical roan jennet. In the background of the picture are seen two or three suspicious-looking figures, as if watching the success of some plot. These may have been put in by the painter to flatter the King, by making it be supposed that he had actually escaped, or successfully combated, some serious plot. The King is attended by a numerous band of courtiers and attendants, all of whom seem moving forward to arrest the defaulter. The painting of this picture is extremely good, but the drawing is very Gothic, and there is no attempt at the keeping of perspective. The picture is very dark and obscure, which considerably adds to the interest of the scene.

NOTE 34. — KING JAMES'S TIMIDITY, p. 332

The fears of James for his personal safety were often excited without serious grounds. On one occasion, having been induced to visit a coal-pit on the coast of Fife, he was conducted a little way under the sea, and brought to daylight again on a small island, or what was such at full tide, down which a shaft had been sunk. James, who conceived his life or liberty aimed at, when he found himself on an islet surrounded by the sea, instead of admiring, as his cicerone hoped, the unexpected change of scene, cried 'Treason' with all his might, and could not be pacified till he was rowed ashore. At Lochmaben he took an equally causeless alarm from a

still slighter circumstance. Some *vandlisses*, a fish peculiar to the loch, were presented to the royal table as a delicacy; but the King, who was not familiar with their appearance, concluded they were poisoned, and broke up the banquet 'with most admired disorder.'

NOTE 35. — TRAITOR'S GATE, p. 335

Traitor's Gate, which opens from the Tower of London to the Thames, was, as its name implies, that by which persons accused of state offences were conveyed to their prison. When the tide is making, and the ancient gate is beheld from within the buildings, it used to be a most striking part of the old fortress; but it is now much injured in appearance, being half built up with masonry to support a steam-engine, or something of that sort.

NOTE 36. — MEMORIALS OF ILLUSTRIOUS CRIMINALS, p. 337

These memorials of illustrious criminals, or of innocent persons who had the fate of such, are still preserved, though at one time, in the course of repairing the rooms, they were in some danger of being whitewashed. They are preserved at present with becoming respect, and have most of them been engraved. See Bayley's *History and Antiquities of the Tower of London*.

NOTE 37. — JAMES I.'S DISLIKE TO ARMS, p. 367

Wilson informs us that when Colonel Grey, a Scotsman who affected the buff dress even in the time of peace, appeared in that military garb at court, the King, seeing him with a case of pistols at his girdle, which he never greatly liked, told him, merrily, 'He was now so fortified that, if he were but well victualled, he would be impregnable' (Wilson's *Life and Reign of James VI.*, apud Kennet's *History of England*, vol. ii. p. 789). In 1612, the tenth year of James's reign, there was a rumour abroad that a shipload of pocket-pistols had been exported from Spain, with a view to a general massacre of the Protestants. Proclamations were of consequence sent forth, prohibiting all persons from carrying pistols under a foot long in the barrel (*Ibid.* p. 690).

NOTE 38. — PUNISHMENT OF STUBBS BY MUTILATION, p. 369

This execution, which so captivated the imagination of Sir Mungo Malagrowth, was really a striking one. The criminal, a furious and bigoted Puritan, had published a book¹ in very violent terms against the match of Elizabeth with the Duke of Alençon, which he termed an union of a daughter of God with a son of Anti-christ. Queen Elizabeth was greatly incensed at the freedom assumed in this work, and caused the author Stubbs, with Page the publisher, and one Singleton the printer, to be tried on an Act passed by Philip and Mary against the writers and dispersers of seditious publications. They were convicted, and although there was an opinion strongly entertained by lawyers, that the act was only temporary, and expired with Queen Mary, Stubbs and Page received sentence to have their right hands struck off. They accordingly suffered the punishment, the wrist being divided by a cleaver driven through the joint by force of a mallet. The printer was pardoned. 'I remember,' says the historian Camden, 'being then present, that Stubbs, when his right hand was cut off, plucked off his hat with the left, and said, with a loud voice, "God save the Queen!"' The multitude

¹ *The Discoverie of a Gaping Gulph, whereinto England is like to be swallowed by another French Marriage, if the Lord forbid not the Banes, by letting her Majestic see the Sin and Punishment thereof* (1579).

standing about was deeply silent, either out of horror of this new and unwonted kind of punishment, or out of commiseration towards the man, as being of an honest and unblamable repute, or else out of hatred to the marriage, which most men presaged would be the overthrow of religion.'—*Camden's Annals for the Year 1581.*

NOTE 39. — ASSASSINATION OF JAMES I. OF SCOTLAND, p. 372

James I. of Scotland was barbarously murdered at Perth, on the 20th February 1437. Several of the ladies were hurt, and, according to most of our historians, Catherine Douglas, one of the Queen's attendants, had her arm broken, by thrusting it into the staple in place of a bolt (*Laing*).

NOTE 40. — RICHIE MONIPLIES BEHIND THE ARRAS, p. 384

The practical jest of Richie Moniplies going behind the arras to get an opportunity of teasing Heriot was a pleasantry such as James might be supposed to approve of. It was customary for those who knew his humour to contrive jests of this kind for his amusement. The celebrated Archie Armstrong, and another jester called Drummond, mounted on other people's backs, used to charge each other like knights in the tilt-yard, to the monarch's great amusement. The following is an instance of the same kind, taken from Webster, *Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft* (p. 124). The author is speaking of the faculty called ventriloquism.

But to make this more plain and certain, we shall add a story of a notable impostor, or ventriloquist, from the testimony of Mr. Ady, which we have had confirmed from the mouth of some courtiers, that both saw and knew him, and is this:—It hath been, saith he, credibly reported, that there was a man in the court in King James his days that could act this imposture so lively, that he could call the King by name, and cause the King to look round about him, wondering who it was that called him, whereas he that called him stood before him in his presence, with his face towards him. But after this imposture was known, the King, in his merriment, would sometimes take occasional by this impostor to make sport upon some of his courtiers, as for instance:—

There was a knight belonging to the court, whom the King caused to come before him in his private room, where no man was but the King and this knight and the impostor, and feigned some occasion of serious discourse with the knight; but when the King began to speak, and the knight bending his attention to the King, suddenly there came a voice as out of another room, calling the knight by name, 'Sir John—Sir John; come away, Sir John'; at which the King [knight] began to frown that any man should be so unmannerly as to molest the King and him; and still listening to the King's discourse, the voice came again, 'Sir John—Sir John, come away and drink off your sack.' At that Sir John began to swell with anger, and looked into the next rooms to see who it was that dared to call him so importunately, and could not find out who it was, and having chid with whomsoever he found, he returned again to the King. The King had no sooner begun to speak as formerly, but the voice came again, 'Sir John, come away, your sack stayeth for you.' At that Sir John began to stamp with madness, and looked out and returned several times to the King, but could not be quiet in his discourse with the King, because of the voice that so often troubled him, till the King had sported enough.

NOTE 41. — LEGLIN-GIRTH, p. 393

A leglin-girth is the lowest hoop upon a leglin, or milk-pail. Allan Ramsay applies the phrase in the same metaphorical sense.

Or bairns can read, they first maun spell,
I learn'd this frae my mammy,
And cast a leglin-girth mysell
Lang ere I married Tammy.

Christ's Kirk on the Green.

NOVEMBER 12, 1887, SATURDAY

My dear Mr. [Name],

I have just received your letter of the 10th inst. and am glad to hear that you are well. I am also well, and hope these few lines will find you the same. I have been thinking much of late about the future of the country, and the state of the nation. It seems to me that we are in a very critical position, and that the time has come when we must decide whether we are to remain a united people, or whether we are to be divided into warring factions. I believe that the only way to preserve our unity is by a firm and consistent policy, and by a strong and efficient government. I am sure that you will agree with me in this, and that you will do all in your power to support the measures which I propose. I am, dear Sir, very truly yours,

[Signature]

My dear Mr. [Name],

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GLOSSARY

OF

WORDS, PHRASES, AND ALLUSIONS

'A BASTARD TO THE TIME,'
etc. (p. 151), from *King
John*, Act i. sc. 1

ANYE, suffer for

ACCIDENS, rudiments of
grammar

ACCOMPT, COMPT, account

ADOLESCENS, etc. (p. 107), a
youth of a comely coun-
tenance and becoming
modesty

'ÆTAS PARENTUM,' etc. (p.
393), the age of our
parents, worse than that
of our ancestors, has
brought us forth worse
than them

AH, HA! TRÈS HONORÉ, etc.
(p. 143), Oh yes; greatly
honoured. I remember—
yes. I used to know a
Lord Glenvarloch in Scot-
land . . . 'my lord's father
presumably? . . . he was
a much better player than
I was. How clever he
was at the back-handed
strokes!

AIGRE, tart, sour

AIN, own; AIN GATE, own way

AIRT, direction, instruction
ALTHEA, gave birth to Mele-
ager; when the boy was
seven days old the Fates
declared that he would
die as soon as a firebrand
then burning on the hearth
should be burnt away.
To prevent this, his mother
put out the firebrand and
kept it hidden in a chest

ALUMNUS, pupil

AMADIS AND ORIANA, the
hero and heroine of the
romance of chivalry,
Amadis of Gaul

AMAIST, almost

ANDIAMOS, or ANDEMOS, let's
to work

ANDREW, or ANDREA, FER-
RARA, a Scottish broad-
sword

ANE, one

ANENT, opposite to

A NEW WAY TO PAY OLD
DEBTS, the title of a
comedy by Philip Mas-
singer (1633)

ANGEL, a gold coin=about
10s.

ANGUIS IN HERBA, a snake in
the grass, something in the
background

ANOTHER-GUESS, another
sort of

A-PEAK, said of an anchor
when the ship rides im-
mediately over it with a
taut cable

APPELLATIO AD CÆSAREM, an
appeal to Cæsar

APPENED, happened

APUD METAMORPHOSEOS, in
the *Metamorphoses*, a
work by the Roman poet
Ovid

AQUA MIRABILIS, wonderful
water, a cordial made of
spirit of wine and spices

ARCANA IMPERII, etc. (p.
394), imperial secrets; he
who knows not how to
dissemble knows not how
to govern

ARCHIE ARMSTRONG, court
jester or fool to James I.
of England

'ARRIPIENS GEMINAS,' etc.
(p. 132), seizing them
twain as the banks receded
away

ASINUS FORTIS, etc. (p. 334),

a strong ass couching down
between the sheepfolds

ASSOCIATION OF GENTLEMEN
MENTIONED BY GOLDSMITH
(p. xxvii). See his *Essays*,
No. ix., 'Specimen of a
'Magazine in Miniature'

ATOMY, a skeleton

AUGHT, to owe; eight

AULD, old; AULD REEKIE,
Edinburgh

AVISED, advised; AVISEMENT,
advice

AWES, owes

AWMOUS, alms, gift

AXYLUS, a treeless, waterless
region in the middle of
Asia Minor

BABINGTON, ANTHONY, exe-
cuted in 1586, at the age
of twenty-five, for con-
spiring the murder of Eliza-
beth and the liberation of
Mary Queen of Scots

BACK-SWORD, a sword with
one sharp edge

BALAS RUBY, a rose-red
variety of ruby

BALE OF DICE, a set of dice,
usually three

BALLOON, a game in which a
large inflated ball, covered
with stout leather, was
struck to and fro by the
arm

BANDELLO, MATHIEU, an
Italian novelist (1480-
1562), author of famous
Novelle or short tales

BANKSIDE, the southern
bank of the Thames, be-
tween Southwark and
Blackfriars Bridges, where
were the Globe and other

NOTE 42. — LADY LAKE, p. 401

Whether out of a meddling propensity common to all who have a gossiping disposition, or from the love of justice, which ought to make part of a prince's character, James was very fond of inquiring personally into the *causes célèbres* which occurred during his reign. In the imposture of the Boy of Bilson, who pretended to be possessed, and of one Richard Haydock, a poor scholar, who pretended to preach during his sleep, the King, to use the historian Wilson's expression, took delight in sounding with the line of his understanding the depth of these brutish impositions, and in doing so, showed the acuteness with which he was endowed by nature. Lady Lake's story consisted in a clamorous complaint against the Countess of Exeter, whom she accused of a purpose to put to death Lady Lake herself, and her daughter, Lady Ross, the wife of the countess's own son-in-law, Lord Ross; and a forged letter was produced, in which Lady Exeter was made to acknowledge such a purpose. The account given of the occasion of obtaining this letter was, that it had been written by the countess at Wimbledon, in presence of Lady Lake and her daughter, Lady Ross, being designed to procure their forgiveness for her mischievous intention. The King remained still unsatisfied, the writing, in his opinion, bearing strong marks of forgery. Lady Lake and her daughter then alleged that, besides their own attestation and that of a confidential domestic, named Diego, in whose presence Lady Exeter had written the confession, their story might also be supported by the oath of their waiting-maid, Sarah Swarton or Wharton, who had been placed behind the hangings at the time the letter was written, and heard the Countess of Exeter read over the confession after she had signed it. Determined to be at the bottom of this accusation, James, while hunting one day near Wimbledon, the scene of the alleged confession, suddenly left his sport, and, galloping hastily to Wimbledon, in order to examine personally the room, discovered, from the size of the apartment, that the alleged conversation could not have taken place in the manner sworn to; and that the tapestry of the chamber, which had remained in the same state for thirty years, was too short by two feet, and, therefore, could not have concealed any one behind it. This matter was accounted an exclusive discovery of the King by his own spirit of shrewd investigation. The parties were punished in the Star Chamber by fine and imprisonment.

NOTE 43. — MILITARY TRAINING OF LONDONERS, p. 420

Clarendon remarks, that the importance of the military exercise of the citizens was severely felt by the Cavaliers during the Civil War, notwithstanding the ridicule that had been showered upon it by the dramatic poets of the day. Nothing less than habitual practice could, at the battle of Newbury and elsewhere, have enabled the Londoners to keep their ranks as pikemen, in spite of the repeated charge of the fiery Prince Rupert and his gallant Cavaliers.

NOTE 44. — PENNY-WEDDING, p. 438

The penny-wedding of the Scots, now disused even among the lowest ranks, was a peculiar species of merry-making, at which, if the wedded pair were popular, the guests who convened contributed considerable sums under pretence of paying for the bridal festivity, but in reality to set the married folk afloat in the world. [See Burt's *Letters from the North of Scotland*, Letter xi.]

GLOSSARY

OF

WORDS, PHRASES, AND ALLUSIONS

- 'A EASTARD TO THE TIME,' etc. (p. 151), from *King John*, Act i. sc. 1
- ABIE, suffer for
- ACCIDENS, rudiments of grammar
- ACCOMPT, COMPT, account
- ADOLESCENS, etc. (p. 107), a youth of a comely countenance and becoming modesty
- 'ÆTAS PARENTUM,' etc. (p. 393), the age of our parents, worse than that of our ancestors, has brought us forth worse than them
- AH, HA! TRÉS HONORÉ, etc. (p. 143), Oh yes, greatly honoured. I remember—yes. I used to know a Lord Glenvarloch in Scotland . . . my lord's father presumably? . . . he was a much better player than I was. How clever he was at the back-handed strokes!
- AIGRE, tart, sour
- AIN, OWN; AIN GATE, OWN way
- AIENT, direction, instruction
- ALTHEA, gave birth to Meleager; when the boy was seven days old the Fates declared that he would die as soon as a firebrand then burning on the hearth should be burnt away. To prevent this, his mother put out the firebrand and kept it hidden in a chest
- ALUMNUS, pupil
- AMADIS AND ORIANA, the hero and heroine of the romance of chivalry, *Amadis of Gaul*
- AMAIST, almost
- ANDIAMOS, or ANDEMOS, let's to work
- ANDREW, or ANDREA, FERARA, a Scottish broadsword
- ANE, one
- ANENT, opposite to
- A NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS, the title of a comedy by Philip Massinger (1633)
- ANGEL, a gold coin=about 10s.
- ANGUIS IN HERBA, a snake in the grass, something in the background
- ANOTHER-GUESS, another sort of
- A-PEAK, said of an anchor when the ship rides immediately over it with a taut cable
- APPELLATIO AD CÆSAREM, an appeal to Cæsar
- APPENED, happened
- APUD METAMORPHOSEOS, in the *Metamorphoses*, a work by the Roman poet Ovid
- AQUA MIRABILIS, wonderful water, a cordial made of spirit of wine and spices
- A BCANA IMPERII, etc. (p. 394), imperial secrets; he who knows not how to dissemble knows not how to govern
- ARCHIE ARMSTRONG, court jester or fool to James I. of England
- 'ARRIPIENS GEMINAS,' etc. (p. 132), seizing them twain as the banks receded away
- ASINUS FORTIS, etc. (p. 334), a strong ass couching down between the sheepfolds
- ASSOCIATION OF GENTLEMEN MENTIONED BY GOLDSMITH (p. xxvii). See his *Essays*, No. ix., 'Specimen of a Magazine in Miniature'
- ATOMY, a skeleton
- AUGHT, to owe; eight
- AULD, old; AULD REEKIE, Edinburgh
- ADVISED, advised; AVISEMENT, advice
- AWES, owes
- AWMOUS, alms, gift
- AXYLUS, a treeless, waterless region in the middle of Asia Minor
- BABINGTON, ANTHONY, executed in 1586, at the age of twenty-five, for conspiring the murder of Elizabeth and the liberation of Mary Queen of Scots
- BACK-SWORD, a sword with one sharp edge
- BALAS RUBY, a rose-red variety of ruby
- BALE OF DICE, a set of dice, usually three
- BALLOON, a game in which a large inflated ball, covered with stout leather, was struck to and fro by the arm
- BANDELLO, MATHIEU, an Italian novelist (1480-1562), author of famous *Novelle* or short tales
- BANKSIDE, the southern bank of the Thames, between Southwark and Blackfriars Bridges, where were the Globe and other

- theatres, also Paris Garden (q. v.)
- BARFORD'S**, or **BEARFORD'S**, **PARK**, now George Street, Edinburgh
- BARN-BREAKING**, frolic, escapade
- BARNES**, or **BARNES**, **ELMS**, a hamlet of Surrey, close to London
- BASILICON DORON**, a work written (1598) by King James as a guide for his eldest son Henry, when he should succeed himself as king
- BASTA**, enough! there!
- BASTARD**, a sweet Spanish wine, resembling Muscadell
- BAWEE**, halfpenny
- BAXTER**, baker
- BAYES**, a name given to Dryden in the second Duke of Buckingham's farce, *The Rehearsal* (1672)
- BEAR-BANNOCK**, a cake of barley-meal
- BEARS, ARE YOU THERE WITH YOUR**, are you harping on that string again? See further Glossary to *The Abbot*
- BEATI PACIFICI**, blessed are the peacemakers
- BECCAFICO**, a small bird of the warbler species, esteemed a delicacy for the table
- BECKING**, curtsying
- BEIN**, well-to-do
- BEL AND THE DRAGON**. See the Apocryphal book with that title
- BELIVE**, by and by
- BELLICOSISSIMUS NOBILISSIMUS**, most warlike, most noble
- BEN**, **STOUT OLD**, Ben Jonson, the poet and dramatist
- BENEVOLENCE**, a forced loan or contribution illegally levied by the kings of England
- BEN JONSON ON JAMES I.** (p. 458). The phrase occurs in the masque entitled *The Metamorphosed Gipsies*
- BENNASKAR**. See Jeweller of Delhi
- 'BESTREW'D ALL WITH RICH ARRAY'**, etc. (p. xxviii), from *Faerie Queene*, Bk. III. canto iv. st. 18
- BICKER**, a bowl for liquor, usually of wood
- BIDE**, to remain, continue; keep; wait
- BIELDY**, sheltered
- BIENNIIUM**, **DICIS**, etc. (p. 107), Two years, do you say? well, well, it was very well done. Not in a day, as they say—understand you, Lord of Glenvarloch?
- BIGGIN**, a linen cap for a young child
- BIGGING**, building
- BILBO**, or **BILBOE**, a Bilboa (Spanish) sword
- BILLIES**, boon companions
- BILSON**, **BOY OF**, an account of his imposture will be found in Kennet's *History of England*, vol. ii. pp. 709, 710
- BING AVAST**, stop, stay, hold; **BING OFF**, go away, off
- BIRKIE**, a smart young fellow, a mettlesome blade
- BLACK, DAVID**, of **NORTH LEITH**, a zealous and distinguished Presbyterian in the reign of James VI.
- BLACK BULL**, meant for Red Bull, a theatre in St. John's Street, Smithfield; or possibly for the Bull (q. v.)
- BLACKFOOT**, a match-maker, go-between
- BLACKMORE**, **SIR RICHARD**, a dull poet satirised by Dryden, Steele, Dennis, and other writers of that period
- BLACK OX TREAD ON YOUR FOOT**, to know what sorrow or adversity is
- BLACK WARD TENURE**, the condition of servitude to a servant
- BLATE**, bashful
- BLEATHERING**, jabbering
- BLOWSELINDA**, or **BLOUZE-LINDA**, an ignorant, frolicsome country wench in Gay's *Shepherd's Week*, intended to ridicule the pastoral Delias, Chlorises, and the like
- BLUE-BANDERS**, royal guards or attendants
- BODDLE**, a Scotch copper coin, worth 4th penny English
- BODE**, what is bidden, an offer
- BONA-ROBA**, a showy wanton
- BOS IN LINGUAM**, more correctly, **HOS IN LINGUA**, literally 'an ox on the tongue,' hence a bribe. The phrase was current in ancient Athens, which had coins bearing the figure of an ox (*bos*) on one side
- BOW-HAND**, left hand, the wrong side
- BRAID LOWLANDS**, in plain broad Scotch
- BRAW**, well-dressed, handsome
- BREWS**, the scum that rises to the top of water in which meat is being boiled
- BRISTLES**, dice in which bristles were fixed, so as to bias them
- BROCHE**, a spit
- BROSE**, oatmeal over which boiling water has been poured
- BROWN BAKER**, a baker of brown bread
- BROWNIE**, a benevolent spirit, supposed to haunt old houses
- BUCHANAN**, **GEORGE**, tutor to James I.
- BUCKET** (them out of), diddle, cheat
- BUCKING-BASKET**, basket for carrying linen in, to be washed and bleached by an old process called 'bucking'
- BUCKLE-BEGGAR**. See Hedge-parson
- BULL**, a theatre in Bishopsgate Street, where Burbage acted
- BUM-BAILEY**, an under-bailiff
- BUNEMOST**, uppermost
- BURROWS-TOWN**, or **BORROWS-TOWN**, a royal borough
- BUSS**, to kiss
- CA**, call; move
- CADGER**, packman, huckster
- CADUCA**, or rather **CADUA**, an allusion to Dryden's play, *The Wild Gallant*, Act i. sc. 2
- CALF-WARD**, place where calves are kept
- CALLAN**, **CALLANT**, a lad
- CAMPSE LINN**, a cataract in the river Tay in Perthshire
- CAMPVERE**, a seaport on the island of Walcheren, Holland, where from 1444 to 1795 the Scots enjoyed special trading privileges. The merchants were under Scottish law, administered by the Lord Conservator
- CANNY**, cautious, prudent; **CANNILY**, skilfully, knowingly
- CANTABIT VACUUS**, being free from care he will sing
- CANTLE**, crown of the head

- CAPIAS, WRIT OF, a writ for arresting a person
- CAPIN, capon, goose
- CARACCO, you decrepit old scamp, a Spanish exclamation
- CARCANET, a necklace, chain
- CABLE, fellow
- CARLE-HEMP, the female hemp, which, because it was the stronger and coarser, was long erroneously believed to be the male (carle)
- CARNIFEX, executioner; CARNIFICIAL, making flesh, killing
- CAROCHE, a 17th century carriage
- CAREY COALS, not suffer an injury unavenged
- CAEWITCHET, or CAERIWITCHET, a pun, puzzling question
- CAST DOUBLETS, play at doublets, a game with dice somewhat like backgammon
- CATALANI, ANGELICA, a great Italian singer of the beginning of the 19th century
- CATCHPOLL, sheriff's officer
- CAUTY, chaff
- CAULDBIFE, cold, chilly
- CAUP, cup, wooden bowl; CLEAN CAUP OUT, to the bottom at one draught
- CENSE, reputed, considered
- CHALMER, chamber
- CHANGE-HOUSE, ale-house
- CHAPPIET, struck (of a clock)
- CHEEK FOR CHOWL, cheek by jowl, close together
- CHENZIE MAIL, chain mail
- CHEE MILOR, my dear lord
- CHIEL, or CHIELD, fellow, young man
- CHITTY, childish, baby-like
- CHOPINS, CHOPINES, high pattens formerly worn by ladies. *See Kenilworth*, Note 14, p. 460
- CHOUSE, cheat, swindle
- CHUCKS, chuck-stones, marbles
- CIMELIA, treasures
- CLARY, a mixture of wine, honey, and spices
- CLAUDIUS CLAUDIANUS, the last of the classic Roman poets, died early in the 5th century
- CLAUGHT, a clutch, knock
- CLAYVER, to talk foolishly
- CLEEK, or CLEIK, hook
- CLOOT, hoof
- CLOVE, stroke, blow
- CLOUTED, patched, mended
- COCK-A-LEEKIE, leek soup in which a cock has been boiled
- COCK LANE, in Stockwell, London, where in 1772 mysterious knockings were asserted to be caused by the ghost of a murdered woman—a vulgar imposture
- COCKSONES, COCKSNAILS, COCK AND PIE, corruptions of God's bones, etc., oaths
- CORR, covering for a woman's head; a wig
- COISTEIL, cowardly; a low varlet
- COLLINS, WILLIAM, an 18th century poet. The lines quoted (p. xv) are from *An Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland*
- COLLOPS, COLLOP, minced meat, slice of meat
- COMMUNIS LINGUA, a common language
- COMPONE LACHRYMAS, dry your tears
- CONFESS, AND—completed by 'be hanged'
- CONTRA EXPECTANDA, contrary to expectation
- CONY-CATCHER, a sharper
- CORDOVAN, Spanish leather, so called from the town of Cordova
- CORN-PICKLE, a grain of corn
- CORPORAL OATH, an oath strengthened by touching a sacred object, as the corporal or linen altar-cloth used at the celebration of the Eucharist
- COSHEERING, familiar, hospitable
- COSSIKE PRACTICE, algebra
- COTED, outstripped
- COUCHEE, evening reception of some great person before retiring to sleep
- COUP, tumble, fall; COUPIT OWER, upset; COUP THE CRANS, to be overturned, upset, come to grief
- COUP DE MAITRE, master-stroke, master-piece
- COURT OF REQUESTS, a court of equity, for the relief of those who addressed the king by supplication
- CRACKED WITHIN THE RING. *See* Ring, cracked within the
- CRAIG, neck; crag, rock
- CRAMP SPEECH, cramping (the bailiff's) challenge that ends in confinement
- CRASSO IN AERE, What a dense atmosphere
- CRAW'D SAE CROUSE, talked so loudly
- CROSS AND FILE, an old game of chance with money, a cross marking the obverse of the coin, whilst the reverse was called the pile
- CRUSH A CUP OF WINE, drink a cup of wine. *Comp.* Crack a bottle
- CRYING ROAST-MEAT, proclaiming publicly one's good fortune
- CULLIONLY, mean, base
- CULLY, one meanly deceived, a dupe
- CURN, a grain
- CUSSER, a stallion
- CUTTER'S LAW, the rules of comradeship amongst thieves
- CUTTY-QUEAN, a worthless woman
- DAFT, crazy
- DAIKERING, strolling
- DANG, knocked
- DAVID LINDSAY, the popular name of Sir David Lyndsay of the Mount, a favourite 16th century Scottish poet
- DE CONTRACTU, etc. (p. 382), on contract of pledge; all agree on this point
- DECUS, a crown-piece
- DE LA MOTTE, the Marquis de la Mothe-Fénelon, French ambassador at Elizabeth's court, proceeded to Edinburgh in 1582
- DEPENDENCE, an affair in which a man's honour was in question, a duellist's term
- DESPARDIEUX, etc. (p. 144), ye gods, what a fine fellow he was!
- DEUTEROSCOPY, second sight
- DEVIL LOOKS OVER LINCOLN, an expression to indicate malignant envy, due to the devil's hatred of the beautiful cathedral at Lincoln. For other explanations of the phrase, *see* Glossary to *Kenilworth*
- DEVIL'S BONES, dice
- DEVIL'S TAVERN, situated near Temple Bar in Fleet Street
- DIET-LOAF, a sort of delicate sweet cake
- DIEU ME DAMME, God damn me!
- DING, to drive, beat, strike
- DIONYSIUS OF SYRACUSE. *It*

- was the Younger who, after his second expulsion in 343 B.C., is said to have kept a school at Corinth. The story of the 'lugg' accords with the suspicious character of the Elder
- DIRDUM**, commotion, stir
- DIRK**, a dagger
- DIVINITUS EVASIT**, providentially escaped
- DOCTORS**, doctored, i. e. false, dice
- DON DIEGO**, a Spanish-like bravo or bully. Richie Monplies, who is alluded to, has been already (p. 309) likened to a Spaniard in a passion
- DONNARD**, stupid
- DONNERIT**, stunned
- DOOMS**, absolutely, positively
- DOR**, GIVING THE, making a fool of, gulling
- DOUBLET**, a counterfeit gem, consisting of two pieces of crystal with a layer of colour between them; **DOUBLETS**, two dice showing faces with exactly the same number of spots or points
- DOUCE**, sensible, respectable, quiet
- DOVER**, stun, stupor
- DOW-COT**, dovecot
- DOWNA**, do not
- DRAFF-POCK**, a sack for grains or refuse malt
- DRUMBLE**, to be sluggish, delay
- DUD**, rag
- DUDGEON DAGGER, KNIFE**, a large knife or dagger, generally with an ornamental hilt
- DUKE OF LENNOX**, Lodowick Stuart, Duke of Lennox and Richmond, and cousin to James I.
- DULE-WEEDS**, mourning
- DUNT**, knock
- EARD-HUNGER**, hunger for land
- EARL OF WARWICK** (p. 18), the mythical Guy of Warwick, the hero of a mediæval romance, who slew a fierce Dun Cow near Warwick
- EASTWARD HOE** (p. 418), America is so indicated geographically in an old play of the period
- EEN**, eyes
- EICHSTADIUS, LAURENTIUS**, a doctor of Stettin, who wrote *Prognosticon Conjunctione magna Saturni et Jovis* (1622), and other works on astrology
- ELRITCH**, unearthly, horrid
- ENOW**, enough
- EQUAM MEMENTO**, etc. (p. 381), remember to stick to your mare in difficulties
- ESPRIT FOLLET**, goblin, sprite
- ETHNIC**, heathen
- ET QUID**, etc. (p. 108), And what is spoken of in Leyden to-day, — your Vossius, has he written nothing new? Certainly nothing, I regret, which has recently appeared in type
- EUCLIO APUD PLAUTUM**. See Plautus, *Aulularia*, Act iv. sc. 9
- EUGH! BELLE! OPTIME!** well done! excellent! first-rate!
- EVITED**, shunned, avoided
- EXEMPLI GRATIA**, for example
- EXIES**, hysterics
- EX NIHILO NIHI FIT**, from nothing, nothing comes
- EXPIRY OF THE LEGAL**, expiration of the period in which an estate that has been pledged for debt may be redeemed
- EX PROPOSITO**, on purpose
- FACILIS DESCENSUS AVERNI**, the easy descent to the infernal regions
- FAELAND**, an ancient royal palace in Fifeshire
- FALSET**, falsehood; false
- FANFARON**, a swaggerer, boaster
- FASH**, trouble, concern; **FASHIOUS**, troublesome
- FATAL BANQUET**, etc. (p. 457), an allusion to the cause of death of Robert Greene, the dramatist and poet
- FAUSE**, false, stupid
- FAUTOR**, patron, faviourer
- FENCE-LOUPER**, fence-leaper, applied to sheep
- FICO**, a fig
- FIT**, foot
- FLECHING**, flattering
- FLESHER**, butcher
- FLOS SULPHUR**, etc., sulphur ointment
- FLOX-SILK**, floss silk, downy silk
- Fog**, to seek gain by pettifogging practices
- FORFEIT**, offence, trespass
- FORFIT**, a measure = quarter of a peck
- FORTUNE**, a theatre in Aldersgate, London
- FOUAT**, the house-leek
- FOULMART**, or **FOUMART**, a polecat
- FOUR HOURS' NUNCHION**, a luncheon or light repast taken four hours after a principal meal
- FOUR QUARTERS**, hands and feet, efficient help
- FRANCIS OF FRANCE**, was defeated and taken prisoner at Pavia in 1525 by the Emperor Charles V.
- FRIAR'S CHICKEN**, chicken broth boiled with eggs, beaten up and dropped into it
- FRONTINACK**, or **FRONTIGNAN**, a sweet muscat wine made at Frontignan, dept. Hérault, France
- FRONTLESS**, shameless
- FULHAM AND GOURD**, different kinds of false dice
- GALLOWAY**, a small strong nag, bred in Galloway, the south-west extremity of Scotland
- GANG**, go; **GANE**, gone
- GAR**, cause, make, compel
- GARNISH**, a fee paid by a prisoner to his fellow-prisoners on first joining them in confinement
- GATE**, **GAIT**, way, manner, kind of; **OUT OF THE GATE**, uncommon, unexceptional; **TO GANG A GREY GATE**, see Grey gate
- GAWDY**, **GAUDY**, festivity
- GAY AND WHEEL**, exceptionally well
- GEAR**, goods, money; affair, business
- GENIYRE**, gin
- GENIUS LOCI**, genius of the place
- GEORGE-A-GREEN**, a resolute pinder or pound-keeper of Wakefield, who single-handed resisted Robin Hood, Little John, and Will Scarlett
- GUITTERN**, a guitar
- GE**, give; **GIEN**, given
- GIFF-GAFF**, mutual obligation, I will serve you if you will serve me
- GILLIE-WHITE-FOOT**, a messenger, errand-boy
- GILRAVAGER**, a wanton fellow
- GIN**, if
- GIR**, a college servant at Cambridge
- GIRNED**, grinned

GLAIKS, glamour, dazzling reflection; GIE THE GLAIKS, to deceive, jilt
GLEED, GANGING, going awry, astray
GOD-DEN, good-evening
GOLDEN ASS OF APULEIUS, a young man named Lucian, metamorphosed into an ass, whose adventures are described in an ancient Greek romance by Apuleius
GOODYEAR, GOODJERE, or GOUJERE, WHAT THE, a coarse expletive, the pox!
GO OVER THE WATER TO THE GARDEN, cross the Thames to Paris Garden (q.v.)
GOKK, a fool
GOWD, gold
GO WOOLWAED, wear uncomfortable clothing, wool next the skin
GRAFF, grave
GRANDE ENTREE, open or official access to court
GRANNAM, grandmother
GRASSMARKET, an open space in Edinburgh where markets were held
GRAT, wept
GREEN, or GREENE, ROBERT, a witty dramatist and poet of the end of the 16th century. *See also* Fatal banquet, etc.
GREET, weep
GREW, to curdle, thrill
GREY (GATE), TO GANG A, to go a bad road, come to an evil end
GRISKINS, the small bones taken out of a fitch of bacon
GRIT, great
GROANING CHEESE. *Compare* Guy Mannering, 'Groaning Cheese,' Note 1, p. 425
GROENWEGENIUS, or GROENWEGEN, SIMON VAN DER MADE, a Dutch jurist (1613-52), town-clerk of Delft, and editor of Grotius
GROSART, GROSSART, gooseberry
GUIDED, managed, directed;
GUIDING, management
GULLY, large knife
GUSEDUE, the goose-pond, duck-pond of the town
GUSTY, savoury
GUTTER-BLOOD, one of mean birth

HACHIS, or HAGGIS, a Scotch pudding of minced meat, mixed with oatmeal, suet,

onions, etc., boiled in a skin bag
HAET, the smallest thing imaginable
HAFITTS, cheeks
HAFFLINS, a hobbledehoy, youth
HAILL, whole, entire
HAIR IN HIS NECK, something that will give one an advantage over or a pretext for twitting another
HALE, whole
HALLYARDS, an old mansion of Fifeshire belonging to the Skene family
HAME-SUCKEN, assaulting a person in his own house
HAMILTON, COUNT ANTHONY, wrote the *Memoirs* of his brother-in-law, Count de Grammont, giving a lively picture of the court of Charles II. of England
HANKED, made furious, baited
HARLE, to drag
HARRY WIND FOUGHT, an allusion to the smith who volunteered to fight with a Highland clan at Perth for the mere love of fighting. *See* Fair Maid of Perth
HART OF GREASE, a hart in best condition
HATCH-DOOR, a half-door
HAUD, hold
HAVINGS, manners
HAWK, to cough violently for the purpose of bringing up phlegm
HAYDOCK, RICHARD, an account of his imposture will be found in Kennet's *History of England*, vol. ii. p. 711
HAYS, an old-fashioned country-dance
HAZARD, a dice game
'HEARTLESS OPT,' etc. (p. xv), from Collins's *Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland*
HEAUTONTIMORUMENOS; or, *The Self-Tormentor*, a comedy by Terence
HEBEN-WOOD, ebony
HECK AND MANGER, prodigal and unconcerned
HEDGE-PARSON, a clergyman who performed irregular marriages
HERMIT OF PARNELL, the subject of a poem by Dr. Thomas Parnell, a minor poet of Queen Anne's reign. The lines in the

text (p. xxiv) parody the original
HER, hot
HETON, dell; crag
HIDALGO, a Spanish nobleman
HIGH DUTCH, German. The German word *gram* means sorrow, affliction, tribulation
HINNY, honey, darling
HIRDIE-GIRDIE, topsy-turvy
HIRPLING, hobbling
HIRSEL, a flock
HIT, a move in backgammon, by which a player compels his adversary to begin over again
HOLBORN, RIDE UP. *See* Ride up Holborn
HORN-MAD, stark mad, outrageous
HORSE-GRAITH, trappings, harness
HOWFF, a haunt
HUFF, swaggerer, blusterer, one swollen with pride or arrogance
HUMMING, strong. Metheglin (and so beer) was said to make the head hum like the hive from which the honey was taken, of which it was made
HUNGERFORD STAIRS, beside the Thames, on the spot where Charing Cross railway bridge now crosses the river
HUSTLE-CAP, pitching halfpence at a mark, and selecting from the whole of the coins such as fall head upwards, according to the several players' nearness to the mark

IGNOTO, unknown
I LICTOR, etc. (p. 444), Go, lictor, bind his hands, cover his head, hang him on the accursed tree
ILKA, ILK, each, every
ILL REDD-UP, very untidy
ILL-WILLY, ill-natured
IKO REX, etc. (p. 107), Yes, your most august Majesty, I staid almost two years among the people of Leyden
'INCLUSUS VARIUS,' etc. (p. 436), an inclosed spirit attends the various stars, and urges on the living work with regulated motion. (Claudian, *Epigrams*, No. 68)
IX CUERPO, without a cloak, naked, a Spanish phrase

PAGENSTECHEUS, or PAGENSTECHE, J. F. G., a Dutch jurist (1686-1746), lectured on law at Steinfort and at Harderwyk

PAIK, beat, chastise

PANDITE FORES, throw open the doors

PANED, variegated, striped

PANGED, crammed, pressed

PARIS GARDEN, a bear-garden in Bankside (*q. v.*), one having been kept on the Thames bank by Robert de Paris in the reign of Richard II.

PAR VOYE DU FAIT, by the rough hand, violence

PASQUINADO, a lampoon

PASSAGE, game of dice

PATER PATRIE, father of the country

PAUL'S CHAIN, a chain drawn across the carriage-way of St. Paul's churchyard during time of divine service

PAVIA. See Francis of France

PEARL-BOGLE, scarecrow

PEDLAR'S FRENCH, vagabonds' cant, jargon

PEERY, knowing, cunning

PEG-A-RAMBA, the title of an obscene old song; see Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, Act ii. sc. 3

PENETRALIA, inner recesses

PENNECH, an old card-game

PENNY SCOTS = $\frac{1}{12}$ th of English penny

PER AQUAM REFECTIONIS, by refreshing waters

PER AVERSIONEM, in the gross

PERDU, in concealment

'PERII, INTERII,' etc. (p. 384), I am lost, ruined, undone; whither can I run? whither not run? Hold, hold!—Whom? who am I to hold? I do not know. I see nothing. Plautus, *Aulularia*, Act iv. sc. 9

PETITS PLATS EXQUIS, exquisite little dishes

PIAZZA, the open arcade running along the north and east sides of old Covent Garden market

PICKTHANK, an officious fellow, toady

PIO, an earthen vessel, jar

PINEAL GLAND, a part of brain supposed by the philosopher Descartes to be the seat of the soul

PISCES PURGA, etc. (p. 378), clean the fish. See that the salt fish is well steeped

PISTOLET, a little pistol

PIT UP, put up, lodge

PLACE DE CARROUSEL, place for showing off horses in chariot-racing and similar exercises

PLACET, petition

PLACK, a copper coin = $\frac{1}{4}$ d. sterling; PLACK AND

BAWBERE, to the full

PLAY REX, domineer over, act despotically towards

PLEACHED, plashed and woven together (said of branches of a tree or hedge)

PLOY, frolic, entertainment

POCK, POKE, a bag, purse

POCK-PUDDING, a Scotsman's term of contempt for an Englishman

POINS AND PETO, in Shakespeare's *Henry IV.*

POINT-DEVICE, in every particular, with the greatest exactitude

POORTITH, poverty

PORT, town-gate

PORTA, BAPTISTA, or GIAMBATTISTA DELLA, a Neapolitan natural philosopher, who wrote *De Humana Physiognomonia* (1591) and other scientific works

PORTUGAL PIECE = 4s., a silver coin worth 8 reals, and sometimes called a piece of eight

POT, a soldier's steel cap

POTESTAS MARITALIS, the rights of a husband

POTTLE, pot or tankard

POUND SCOTS = 1s. 8d. English

POUTHER, gunpowder

POW BURN, a ditch in Newington, a southern suburb of Edinburgh

POWDERED (beef), sprinkled with salt, etc., pickled

PRELUBATIO MATRIMONII, foretaste of marriage

PRETABLE, payable

PRESTER JOHN, a fabulous Christian king of distant Asia (or Abyssinia), reputed to be possessed of immense wealth

PRIZ, to taste

PRINCIPUM ET FONS, head and source

PRINCOX, a cockcomb

PROPERA PEDEM, hasten away

PROXENETA, a negotiator, agent

PRUNELLA, a kind of lasting of which clergymen's gowns were formerly made

PUBLIUS TERENCE, or TERENCE, the Roman comedy-writer, was a native of Carthage in Africa, and was taken to Rome a slave

PULCHRA SANE FUELLA, truly a beautiful girl

PUNCHINELLO, a puppet-showman

QUÆ MARIBUS, etc., which are attributed only to males
QUAION, a small drinking-cup
QUAM BONUM ET QUAM JUCUNDUM, how good and how pleasant

QUARRIE, or CURIE, quarry, killed game

QUARRY HOLES, a depression at the foot of Calton Hill, near Holyrood Palace, where duels were fought, and female criminals drowned

QUEAN, a woman, wench

QUEERED, ridiculed, derided

QU'EST-CE, etc. (p. 143), What have we to do with the part?

QUID DE SYMBOLO? What of the sign?

QUIS DESIDERIO, etc. (p. 330), What shame or limit can there be to the affection borne for so dear a person?

QUOAD ANGILOS, as regards the English

QUOAD HOMINEM, LOCUM, as regards the man, the place

RABBLE, to mob, assault in a riotous fashion

RAID OF RUTHVEN, a conspiracy of Scottish nobles in 1582, to free James VI. (I.), then a boy, from the faction of Lennox and Arran

RAMPALLIAN, rascal, villain
RASP-HAUS, more correctly *rasp-huis*, a house of correction, prison

RAX, to stretch

REDDING-KAIM, unravelling comb

REDD THE GATE, cleared, prepared the way; REDD UP, put in order

REDRIFF, the popular pronunciation of Rotherhithe

RED-SHANK, bare-legged person, a Highlander

RED TOP OF ST. ANDREWS, King James V. of Scotland; he had red hair

RED-WUD, stark mad

REFORMADO, an officer deprived of his command, but retaining his rank and pay

REGIS AD EXEMPLAR, etc. (p. 322), the whole world is arranged after the example of the king

REIRD, clamour, noise

REM ACT, etc. (p. 401), You have hit the nail on the head, Baby Charles

REMED, remedy, redress

RES ANGUSTA DOMI, straitened circumstances at home

REX, PLAY. See *Play rex*

RIDE UP HOLBORN (HILL), in the executioner's cart, on the way to be hanged at Tyburn

RING, CRACKED WITHIN THE, faulty in sound (ring), not good

RITSON, JOSEPH, a learned but eccentric 18th century antiquary, animated by a passion for strict and literal accuracy

ROAST-MEAT, CRYING. See *Crying roast-meat*

ROLLOCK, ROBERT, the first professor of the University of Edinburgh, founded in 1582

ROOK, defraud, clear out

ROOPT, croaking, hoarse

ROSA SOLIS, a cordial, made of spirits, flavoured with cinnamon, orange-flower, etc.

ROSE-NOBLE, noble bearing representation of a rose, first coined under Edward VI., and worth 10s.

ROSE TAVERN, in Russell Street, Covent Garden

RÔTI DES PLUS EXCELLENS, a most excellent roast

ROUNDING, whispering;

ROUNDLY, bluntly, frankly

ROW, roll; BOWLS ROW

WRANG, things go amiss

ROWT, roar, bellow

RUDAS, bold, masculine woman

RUMNER GLASSES, large drinking-glasses

RUNDLET, a small barrel, holding 18½ gallons

RUTHVENS, William Earl of Gowrie and his associates.

See *Raid of Ruthven*

SAAM, same

SACKLESS, innocent

SAE, so

ST. BARNABY WAS TEN YEARS, ten years ago last St.

Barnabas Day, i.e. 11th June

ST. THOMAS-A-WATERING, a church on the Old Kent Road, Southwark, so called from a brook dedicated to St. Thomas-a-Becket

SAIR, sore

SALT EEL, an eel or eel's skin prepared for use as a whip; a flogging, beating

SALVE BIS, etc. (p. 107), Twice hail, and four times, our Glenvarloch! Have you not lately returned to Britain from Leyden?

SALVE MAGNE PARENS, Hail, great parent

SANCHO'S SUPPRESSED WITICISMS, in *Don Quixote*, Pt. I. bk. iii. chap. xxi.

SARA, THE DAUGHTER OF RAGUEL. See the Book of Tobit, iii. 2, 3, in the Apocrypha

SCANDAALUM MAGNAATUM, an offence against those in authority

SCANTLING, a smattering, modicum

SCAUDING, scolding; also scalding

SCAUR, scare, frighten

SCOTCH MILE = 9 furlongs

SCOUALL, a Scottish portrait-painter of the time of Charles II.

SCOUT, a college servant at Oxford

SECUNDUM ARTEM, according to rule

SED SEMEL INSANIVIMUS OMNES, we have all been mad at one time or another

SEMI-REDUCTA VENUS, half-reclining Venus

SERIES PATEFACTI, etc. (p. 333), the series of the murder providentially revealed

SHABBLE, a crooked sword, or hanger

SHOON, shoes

SHOT OF, shut of, free from

SHOUTHER, shoulder

SHULE, shovel

SIB, related

SIC, such

SIC FUT, EST, ERIT, thus it was, is, and will be

SICKER, sure, certain

SIFFICATION, supplication, petition

SIMMIE AND HIS BROTHER, two begging friars, whose rogueries make the subject of an old satirical ballad; see *David Laing's*

Select Remains of Ancient Popular Poetry (1822)

SINCIPUT, the upper part of the skull; forehead

SINE MORA, without delay

SKEIGH, skittish

SKELDER, to swindle, cheat

SEENE, SEEN, a Highlander's knife

SKENE, SIR JOHN, a great lawyer and scholar, whom in 1589 it had been suggested to send to Denmark to arrange for James I.'s marriage with Princess Anne of that country

SLEEVELESS GATE, a fruitless errand

SLOPS, breeches; HUGEPANED SLOPS, breeches with large stripes or variations

SLURRING, a particular way of sliding or slipping dice

SMAIK, rascal, contemptible fellow

SMELT, half-guinea

SNAP-HAUNCE, a firelock

SNIGGER, SNIGGLE, to giggle

SOLDADO, a soldier

SOLDAN, sultan

SPANGS, springs, leaps

SPANISH AMBASSADOR'S TIME, in 1603-8, when Don Pedro de Cúñiga was Spanish ambassador at the court of James I.

SPEER, to inquire, ask;

SPEERINGAS, inquiries

SPOILIA OPIMA, the richest booty

SPONDANUS, or HENRI DE SPONDE (1568-1643), bishop of Famiers in France, wrote several historical works

SPRAICKLE, clamber

SPRINGALD, a stripling

SPUNKIE, will o' the wisp, *ignis fatuus*

SPUNK OUT, leak out

STABBING, using a box so narrow at the bottom that the dice fall out with those faces uppermost which were put in looking downwards

STAND BUFF, confront boldly, without fear

STANDISH, inkstand

STATIM ATQUE INSTANTER, instantly and at once

STEEKIT, shut, closed

STEENTE, the nickname James I. gave to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, owing to some fancied resemblance he bore to the martyr Stephen

- STOCK-FISH, dried cod or ling
STOCKING, putting in the
stocks
STOT, bullock
STRAND-SCOURING, gutter-
hunting
STRAPPING UP, being hanged
STYPTIC, a remedy to check
the flow of blood
SUBSCRIBE, subscribe, sign
SUCCORY-WATER, chicory
water
SULLY, Maximilien de
Bethune, Duke of, minister
of Henry IV. of France,
and author of famous
Mémoires (1634 and 1662)
SUMMA TOTALIS, the sum
total
SURGE CARNIFEX, rise up,
butcher
SUSANNA AND THE ELDERS.
See The History of Susanna
in the Apocrypha
SWAD, a silly, coarse person,
country bumpkin
SWADDLED, beat, cudgelled
SWAN OF AVON, Shakespeare,
so called by Ben Jonson
SWITH, instantly
SYLLABUB, or SILLIBUB, wine,
ale, or cider, mixed with
cream or milk, then sweet-
ened and flavoured with
lemon-juice, rose-water,
etc.
SYRUS, PHILOSOPHICAL, a
Syrian slave, known as
Publius, under whose
name a collection of pithy
proverbs was long current
in Rome
TABINET, a texture of silk
and wool, with a watered
surface
TAE, the one
TA'EX, taken
TAIT OF WOOL, a lock or small
portion of wool
TANQUAM IN SPECULO, etc.
(p. 322), I order you to
look into the dishes as into
a mirror
TAWSE, a strap cut into
narrow thongs, for whip-
ping boys
TECUM CERTASSE, to have
contended with you
TEDWORTH, DRUM OF, beaten,
it was believed, by the
ghost of a drummer-boy,
murdered under circum-
stances similar to those
narrated of Jarvis
Matcham in Scott's *De-
monology and Witchcraft*,
Letter 2.
TEINDS, tithes
TEMPLARS, law-students of
the Temple
TEMPORA MUTANTUR, times
are changed
TENEZ, MONSIEUR, etc. (p.
145) There you are; it's
you I mean
TENT WINE, a deep red wine
made near Malaga in Spain
TESTER, an old silver coin
= 6d.
TEWKESBURY MUSTARD, was
formerly sent in little balls
all over England. *Comp.*
Ilen. IV. Part II. Act ii.
sc. 4
THALES, INJURED. See In-
jured Thales of the
moralist
'THE DEVIL DAMN THEE
BLACK,' etc. (p. 122). See
Macbeth, Act v. sc. 3
'THE HALLOW'D SOIL,' etc.
(p. 318). Queen Elizabeth
was born in Greenwich
Palace
THEOBALD'S, a royal seat of
James I. near Cheshunt,
in Hertshire
THE STALK OF CARLE-HEMP,
etc. (p. 318), used in
Burns's Poem *To Black-
lock*. See also *Carle-hemp*
THIRD NIGHT (of playwright).
The proceeds of the third
night after a new play was
put on the stage went to
the author
'THOSE LYRIC FEASTS,' etc.
(p. 162), from Herrick's
Hesperides
THROUGH-STANES, flat grave-
stones
TIB, ace of trumps in gleeck,
counted 15
TIDDY, four of trumps in
gleeck, counted 4
TILT, an awning
TINT, lost
TITVETU'S, town sparks of
the end of the 17th century
— name borrowed from
Virgil's *Eclogue*, l. 1
TOCHER, dowry
TOD LOWRIE, equivalent to
Reynard the Fox, a crafty
person
TOOM, empty
TORRING, was when only one
die was dropped in the
box, the other being held,
concealed, between the
fingers at the top of the box
TOUR, or TOOT, a blast of a
horn; fit of ill-humour or
ill-health
TOWSEN, five of trumps in
gleeck, which counted 5,
not 15, in the game
TRANKUM, gimcrack, a
trumpety thing
TREEN, wooden
TREPAN, or TRAPAN, a snare,
trap
TRÈS BON GENTILHOMME
POURTANT, a very excel-
lent gentleman, neverthe-
less
TROWL, to throw, roll, drive
about
TRUEPENNY. See Old True-
penny
TRUNNION, a stake, tree-
trunk, truncheon
TURBATE PALLADIS ARMA,
arms of the troubled
Pallas (Athenes), who
made the Gorgon so hide-
ous that whoever looked
upon her was turned into
stone
TURN-BROCHE, a turnspit
TWA, two
TWELVE KAISERS, first twelve
Cæsars, or emperors, of
ancient Rome
TWIRING, making eyes, tak-
ing sly glances
TYKE, a cur
UMQUHILE, the late
UNCE, ounce
UNDER THE ROSE, *sub rosa*,
to tell you in confidence
UN VRAI DIABLE DÉCHAINÉ,
a very unchained devil
USQUE AD MUTILATIONEM,
even to dismemberment
VÆ ATQUE DOLOR, grief and
pain
VALEAT QUANTUM, may it
avail much
VALET QUIDEM, etc. (p. 108),
Vossius is indeed well,
gracious king, but is a
most venerable old man,
if I am not mistaken, in
his seventieth year
VAPOUR ONE THE HUFF, to
assume a bullying style;
VAPOURS YOU THE GO-BY,
treats you with neglect,
indifference
VENDISSES, or VENDAGE, a
choice kind of white-fish,
found only in one or two
places in England, Scot-
land, and Sweden
VENIENTI OCCURRITE MORBO,
meet the coming disease
VENNEL, a steep street on
the south side of the
Grassmarket, Edinburgh
VENTRE ST. GRIS, an oath,
meaning probably, 'By the
body of St. Christ'

VERQUERE, an old Dutch game, something resembling backgammon

VESSAIL, vessels, plate

VIA, a way

VIDI TERRAM, etc. (p. 334), I saw the land that it was very good, and I bent my shoulder to carry, and am become a servant under tribute

VIED THE RUFF AND REVIED, staked and staked again on the trump—terms used in gleek

VI NEMPE, etc. (p. 392), doubtless by force, and in a way common to fathers

VINIUS, or VINNEN, ARNOLD, a Dutch jurist, rector of a college at the Hague, and afterwards (1633-57) law professor at Leyden

VINTRY, a portion of Thames Street, between London and Blackfriars Bridges, where the wine-merchants unshipped their cargoes

VIRETOR, ON THE, on the trudge, on the tramp—a phrase used in Chaucer's *Miller's Tale*

VIRUM MEHERCLE, etc. (p. 108), So help me, Hercules, I had scarcely thought him so old a man; and that Vorstius, the successor as well as adherent of the reprobate Arminius—is that hero, as I may say with Homer, still alive and seeing the light on earth?

VIVERS, victuals

VIVUM QUIDEM, etc. (p. 108), It is not long since I saw the man, alive, indeed; but who can say he flourishes who has long lain prone and prostrate under

the bolts of your eloquence, great king

VOETIUS. There are two celebrated Dutch jurists of this name—Paul Voet (1619-77), a professor at Utrecht, and his son John (1647-1714), who practised at Utrecht and at Leyden

VORSTIUS, or VOORST, CONRAD, succeeded Arminius as teacher in Leyden in 1610. James I. wrote a tract against him

VOSSIUS, GERARD JOHN, a very learned Dutchman, educated at Leyden, and some time (1622-30) professor there

WAD, LAID IN, pledged, mortgaged

WADSET, a mortgage

WAISTCOATEER, wearer of a waistcoat, prostitute

WAITER, keeper of a town-gate in Edinburgh

WANION, WITH A, with a vengeance, the devil!

WAP AND WIN, an obscene expression, to go in and win

WARLOCK, wizard

WASTRIFE, wasteful

WATER OF LEITH, a narrow stream that passes along the north side of Edinburgh to the Firth of Forth at Leith

WAUR, worse

WELL-A-DAY, or WELLAWAY, an ejaculation of sorrow or grief

WELSH MAIN, in cock-fighting, was when the winners in each bout fought against one another till only one bird remained

WESTWARD HOE, to the west, an old cry of the London

watermen soliciting passengers going west

WHEEN, a few

'WHERE AS SHE LOOK'D ABOUT,' etc. (p. xxix), from Spenser's *Faërie Queene*, Bk. III. canto xi. st. 54

WHIGMALEERY, or WHIGMELEERIE, whimsical

WHIMST, a whim

WHINGER, a large knife, usually worn at the belt

WHINYARD, a short sword, hanger

WHOMLE, turn over

WHUNSTANE, whinstone

WIMPLE, clothed with a wimple, a voluminous covering for the head, worn by women

WINNA, will not

WITHY, WIDDIE, a halter, the gallows

WONNOT, won't, will not

WOOLWARD, to go dressed in wool only, worn next the skin

WOT, know; WOTNA, know not

WUSSING, wishing

WYLIE-COAT, under-vest, under-petticoat

WYTE, blame

YELLOW-HAMMER, gold coin

YESTATE, estate

'YET, CERTES, BY HER FACE,' etc. (p. xvi), from *Faërie Queene*, Bk. VII. canto vii. st. 5

ZENO, THE ELEATIC, the favourite disciple of Parmenides, is said to have ventured his life to free his native country (unknown) from a tyrant; or perhaps Zeno the Stolo is meant

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THE
WAVERLEY NOVELS
OF
SIR WALTER SCOTT
VOLUME XVII



ST. RONAN'S WELL



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INTRODUCTION TO ST. RONAN'S WELL

THE novel which follows is upon a plan different from any other that the Author has ever written, although it is perhaps the most legitimate which relates to this kind of light literature.

It is intended, in a word, *celebrare domestica facta* — to give an imitation of the shifting manners of our own time, and paint scenes the originals of which are daily passing round us, so that a minute's observation may compare the copies with the originals. It must be confessed that this style of composition was adopted by the Author rather from the tempting circumstance of its offering some novelty in his compositions, and avoiding worn-out characters and positions, than from the hope of rivalling the many formidable competitors who have already won deserved honours in this department. The ladies, in particular, gifted by nature with keen powers of observation and light satire, have been so distinguished by these works of talent that, reckoning from the authoress of *Evelina* to her of *Marriage*, a catalogue might be made, including the brilliant and talented names of Edgeworth, Austen, Charlotte Smith, and others, whose success seems to have appropriated this province of the novel as exclusively their own. It was therefore with a sense of temerity that the Author intruded upon a species of composition which had been of late practised with such distinguished success. This consciousness was lost, however, under the necessity of seeking for novelty, without which, it was much to be apprehended, such repeated incursions on his part would nauseate the long indulgent public at the last.

The scene chosen for the Author's little drama of modern life was a mineral spring, such as are to be found in both divisions of Britain, and which are supplied with the usual materials for redeeming health or driving away care. The invalid often finds relief from his complaints less from the healing virtues of the spa itself than because his system of

ordinary life undergoes an entire change, in his being removed from his ledger and account-books, from his legal folios and progresses of title-deeds, from his counters and shelves, from whatever else forms the main source of his constant anxiety at home, destroys his appetite, mars the custom of his exercise, deranges the digestive powers, and clogs up the springs of life. Thither, too, comes the saunterer, anxious to get rid of that wearisome attendant *himself*, and thither come both males and females, who, upon a different principle, desire to make themselves double.¹

The society of such places is regulated, by their very nature, upon a scheme much more indulgent than that which rules the world of fashion and the narrow circles of rank in the metropolis. The titles of rank, birth, and fortune are received at a watering-place without any very strict investigation, as adequate to the purpose for which they are preferred; and as the situation infers a certain degree of intimacy and sociability for the time, so to whatever heights it may have been carried, it is not understood to imply any duration beyond the length of the season. No intimacy can be supposed more close for the time, and more transitory in its endurance, than that which is attached to a watering-place acquaintance. The novelist, therefore, who fixes upon such a scene for his tale endeavours to display a species of society where the strongest contrast of humorous characters and manners may be brought to bear on and illustrate each other with less violation of probability than could be supposed to attend the same miscellaneous assemblage in any other situation.

In such scenes, too, are frequently mingled characters not merely ridiculous, but dangerous and hateful. The unprincipled gamester, the heartless fortune-hunter, all those who eke out their means of subsistence by pandering to the vices and follies of the rich and gay, who drive, by their various arts, foibles into crimes, and imprudence into acts of ruinous madness, are to be found where their victims naturally resort, with the same certainty that eagles are gathered together at the place of slaughter. By this the Author takes a great advantage for the management of his story, particularly in its darker and more melancholy passages. The impostor, the gambler, all who live loose upon the skirts of society, or, like vermin, thrive by its corruptions, are to be found at such retreats, when they easily, and as a matter of course, mingle with those dupes

¹ See Scott at Gillsland. Note 1.

INTRODUCTION TO ST. RONAN'S WELL

who might otherwise have escaped their snares. But be those characters who are actually dangerous to society, a frequented watering-place generally exhibits for the amusement of the company, and the perplexity and amazement of the inexperienced, a sprinkling of persons called by the newspapers eccentric characters — individuals, namely, who, either from some real derangement of their understanding, or, much more frequently, from an excess of vanity, are ambitious of distinguishing themselves by some striking peculiarity in dress, address, conversation or manners, and perhaps in all. These affectations are usually adopted, like Drawcansir's extravagances, to show *they dare*; and I must needs say, those who profess them are more frequently to be found among the English than among the natives of either of the other two divisions of the united kingdoms. The reason probably is that the consciousness of wealth, and a sturdy feeling of independence which generally pervade the English nation, are, in a few individuals, perverted into absurdity, or at least peculiarity. A witty Irishman, on the contrary, adapts his general behaviour to that of the best society, or that which he thinks such; is it any part of the shrewd Scot's national character unnecessarily to draw upon himself public attention. These remarks, however, are not without their exceptions; for we find men in every country playing the eccentric at these independent sorts of the gay and the wealthy, where every one enjoys license of doing what is good in his own eyes.

It scarce needed these obvious remarks to justify a novel choice of a watering-place as the scene of a fictitious narrative. Unquestionably it affords every variety of character, mixed together in a manner which cannot, without a breach of probability, be supposed to exist elsewhere; neither can it be denied that, in the concourse which such miscellaneous collections of persons afford, events extremely different from those of quiet routine of ordinary life may, and often do, take place.

It is not, however, sufficient that a mine be in itself rich and easily accessible; it is necessary that the engineer who explores it should himself, in mining phrase, have an accurate knowledge of the 'country,' and possess the skill necessary to work it to advantage. In this respect, the Author of *Ronan's Well* could not be termed fortunate. His habit of life had not led him much, of late years at least, into its gay or bustling scenes, nor had he mingled often in the society which enables the observer to 'shoot folly as it flies.'

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consequence perhaps was, that the characters wanted that force and precision which can only be given by a writer who is familiarly acquainted with his subject.¹ The Author, however, had the satisfaction to chronicle his testimony against the practice of gambling, a vice which the devil has contrived to render all his own, since it is deprived of whatever pleads an apology for other vices, and is founded entirely on the cold-blooded calculation of the most exclusive selfishness. The character of the traveller, meddling, self-important, and what the ladies call fussing, but yet generous and benevolent in his purposes, was partly taken from nature. The story, being entirely modern, cannot require much explanation, after what has been here given, either in the shape of notes or a more prolix introduction.

It may be remarked that the English critics, in many instances, though none of great influence, pursued *St. Ronan's Well* with hue and cry, many of the fraternity giving it as their opinion that the Author had exhausted himself, or, as the technical phrase expresses it, 'written himself out'; and as an unusual tract of success too often provokes many persons to mark and exaggerate a slip when it does occur, the Author was publicly accused, in prose and verse, of having committed a literary suicide in this unhappy attempt. The voices, therefore, were for a time against *St. Ronan's* on the southern side of the Tweed.

In the Author's own country it was otherwise. Many of the characters were recognised as genuine Scottish portraits, and the good fortune which had hitherto attended the productions of the Author of *Waverley* did not desert, notwithstanding the ominous vaticinations of its censurers, this new attempt, although out of his ordinary style.

1st February 1832.

¹ [See Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, vol. vii. pp. 206-212.]

ST. RONAN'S WELL

CHAPTER I

An Old-World Landlady

But to make up my tale,
She breweth good ale,
And thereof maketh sale.

SKELTON.

ALTHOUGH few, if any, of the countries of Europe have increased so rapidly in wealth and cultivation as Scotland during the last half-century, Sultan Mahmoud's owls might nevertheless have found in Caledonia, at any term within that flourishing period, their dowry of ruined villages. Accident or local advantages have in many instances transferred the inhabitants of ancient hamlets from the situations which their predecessors chose with more respect to security than convenience to those in which their increasing industry and commerce could more easily expand itself; and hence places which stand distinguished in Scottish history, and which figure in David M'Pherson's excellent historical map, can now only be discerned from the wild moor by the verdure which clothes their site, or, at best, by a few scattered ruins resembling pinfolds, which mark the spot of their former existence.

The little village of St. Ronan's, though it had not yet fallen into the state of entire oblivion we have described, was, about twenty years since, fast verging towards it. The situation had something in it so romantic that it provoked the pencil of every passing tourist; and we will endeavour, therefore, to describe it in language which can scarcely be less intelligible than some of their sketches, avoiding, however, for reasons which seem to us of weight, to give any more exact indication of the site than that it is on the southern

side of the Forth, and not above thirty miles distant from the English frontier.

A river of considerable magnitude pours its streams through a narrow vale, varying in breadth from two miles to a fourth of that distance, and which, being composed of rich alluvial soil, is, and has long been, inclosed, tolerably well inhabited, and cultivated with all the skill of Scottish agriculture. Either side of this valley is bounded by a chain of hills, which, on the right in particular, may be almost termed mountains. Little brooks arising in these ridges, and finding their way to the river, offer each its own little vale to the industry of the cultivator. Some of them bear fine large trees, which have as yet escaped the axe, and upon the sides of most there are scattered patches and fringes of natural copsewood, above and around which the banks of the stream arise, somewhat desolate in the colder months, but in summer glowing with dark purple heath or with the golden lustre of the broom and gorse. This is a sort of scenery peculiar to those countries which abound, like Scotland, in hills and in streams, and where the traveller is ever and anon discovering, in some intricate and unexpected recess, a simple and silvan beauty, which pleases him the more that it seems to be peculiarly his own property as the first discoverer.

In one of these recesses, and so near its opening as to command the prospect of the river, the broader valley, and the opposite chain of hills, stood; and, unless neglect and desertion have completed their work, still stands, the ancient and decayed village of St. Ronan's. The site was singularly picturesque, as the straggling street of the village ran up a very steep hill, on the side of which were clustered, as it were, upon little terraces, the cottages which composed the place, seeming, as in the Swiss towns on the Alps, to rise above each other towards the ruins of an old castle, which continued to occupy the crest of the eminence, and the strength of which had doubtless led the neighbourhood to assemble under its walls for protection. It must, indeed, have been a place of formidable defence, for, on the side opposite to the town, its walls rose straight up from the verge of a tremendous and rocky precipice, whose base was washed by St. Ronan's burn, as the brook was entitled. On the southern side, where the declivity was less precipitous, the ground had been carefully levelled into successive terraces, which ascended to the summit of the hill, and were, or rather had been, connected by staircases of stone, rudely ornamented. In peaceful periods these terraces had been occupied by the

gardens of the castle, and in times of siege they added to its security; for each commanded the one immediately below it, so that they could be separately and successively defended, and all were exposed to the fire from the place itself — a massive square tower of the largest size, surrounded, as usual, by lower buildings and a high embattled wall. On the northern side arose a considerable mountain, of which the descent that lay between [above?] the eminence on which the castle was situated seemed a detached portion; and which had been improved and deepened by three successive huge trenches. Another very deep trench was drawn in front of the main entrance from the east, where the principal gateway formed the termination of the street, which, as we have noticed, ascended from the village, and this last defence completed the fortifications of the tower.

In the ancient gardens of the castle, and upon all sides of it excepting the western, which was precipitous, large old trees had found root, mantling the rock and the ancient and ruinous walls with their dusky verdure, and increasing the effect of the shattered pile which towered up from the centre.

Seated on the threshold of this ancient pile, where the 'proud porter' had in former days 'rear'd himself,'¹ a stranger had a complete and commanding view of the decayed village, the houses of which, to a fanciful imagination, might seem as if they had been suddenly arrested in hurrying down the precipitous hill, and fixed as if by magic in the whimsical arrangement which they now presented. It was like a sudden pause in one of Amphion's country dances, when the huts which were to form the future Thebes were jigging it to his lute. But, with such an observer, the melancholy excited by the desolate appearance of the village soon overcame all the lighter frolics of the imagination. Originally constructed on the humble plan used in the building of Scotch cottages about a century ago, the greater part of them had been long deserted; and their fallen roofs, blackened gables, and ruinous walls showed desolation's triumph over poverty. On some huts the rafters, varnished with soot, were still standing, in whole or in part, like skeletons, and a few, wholly or partially covered with thatch, seemed still inhabited, though scarce habitable; for the smoke of the peat-fires, which prepared the humble meal of the indwellers, stole upwards, not only from the chimneys, its regular vent, but from various other crevices in the roofs. Nature, in the meanwhile, always changing, but renewing as

¹ See the old ballad of 'King Estmere,' in *Percy's Reliques*.

she changes, was supplying, by the power of vegetation, the fallen and decaying marks of human labour. Small pollards, which had been formerly planted around the little gardens, had now waxed into huge and high forest trees; the fruit-trees had extended their branches over the verges of the little yards, and the hedges had shot up into huge and irregular bushes; while quantities of dock, and nettles, and hemlock, hiding the ruined walls, were busily converting the whole scene of desolation into a picturesque forest-bank.

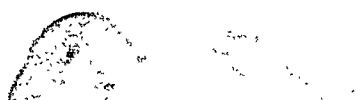
Two houses in St. Ronan's were still in something like decent repair — places essential, the one to the spiritual weal of the inhabitants, the other to the accommodation of travellers. These were the clergyman's manse and the village inn. Of the former we need only say, that it formed no exception to the general rule by which the landed proprietors of Scotland seem to proceed in lodging their clergy, not only in the cheapest, but in the ugliest and most inconvenient, house which the genius of masonry can contrive. It had the usual number of chimneys — two, namely — rising like asses' ears at either end, which answered the purpose for which they were designed as ill as usual. It had all the ordinary leaks and inlets to the fury of the elements, which usually form the subject of the complaints of a Scottish incumbent to his brethren of the presbytery; and, to complete the picture, the clergyman being a bachelor, the pigs had unmolested admission to the garden and courtyard, broken windows were repaired with brown paper, and the disordered and squalid appearance of a low farm-house, occupied by a bankrupt tenant, dishonoured the dwelling of one who, besides his clerical character, was a scholar and a gentleman, though little of a humourist.

Beside the manse stood the kirk of St. Ronan's, a little old mansion with a clay floor, and an assemblage of wretched pews, originally of carved oak, but heedfully clouted with white fir-deal. But the external form of the church was elegant in the outline, having been built in Catholic times, when we cannot deny to the forms of ecclesiastical architecture that grace which, as good Protestants, we refuse to their doctrine. The fabric hardly raised its grey and vaulted roof among the crumbling hills of mortality by which it was surrounded, and was indeed so small in size, and so much lowered in height by the graves on the outside, which ascended half-way up the low Saxon windows, that it might itself have appeared only a funeral vault, or mausoleum, of larger size. Its little square tower,



ST. RONAN'S VILLAGE.

From a painting by George Reid, R.S.A.



with the ancient belfry, alone distinguished it from such a monument. But when the grey-headed beadle turned the keys with his shaking hand, the antiquary was admitted into an ancient building which, from the style of its architecture, and some monuments of the Mowbrays of St. Ronan's, which the old man was accustomed to point out, was generally conjectured to be as early as the 13th century.

These Mowbrays of St. Ronan's seem to have been at one time a very powerful family. They were allied to, and friends of, the house of Douglas at the time when the overgrown power of that heroic race made the Stuarts tremble on the Scottish throne. It followed that, when, as our old *naïf* historian expresses it, 'no one dared to strive with a Douglas, nor yet with a Douglas's man, for if he did, he was sure to come by the waur,' the family of St. Ronan's shared their prosperity, and became lords of almost the whole of the rich valley of which their mansion commanded the prospect. But upon the turning of the tide in the reign of James II., they became despoiled of the greater part of those fair acquisitions, and succeeding events reduced their importance still farther. Nevertheless they were, in the middle of the 17th century, still a family of considerable note; and Sir Reginald Mowbray, after the unhappy battle of Dunbar, distinguished himself by the obstinate defence of the castle against the arms of Cromwell, who, incensed at the opposition which he had unexpectedly encountered in an obscure corner, caused the fortress to be dismantled and blown up with gunpowder.

After this catastrophe the old castle was abandoned to ruin; but Sir Reginald, when, like Allan Ramsay's Sir William Worthy, he returned after the Revolution, built himself a house in the fashion of that later age, which he prudently suited in size to the diminished fortunes of his family. It was situated about the middle of the village, whose vicinity was not in those days judged any inconvenience, upon a spot of ground more level than was presented by the rest of the acclivity, where, as we said before, the houses were notched as it were into the side of the steep bank, with little more level ground about them than the spot occupied by their site. But the laird's house had a court in front and a small garden behind, connected with another garden, which, occupying three terraces, descended, in emulation of the orchards of the old castle, almost to the banks of the stream.

The family continued to inhabit this new messuage until about fifty years before the commencement of our history,

when it was much damaged by a casual fire; and the laird of the day, having just succeeded to a more pleasant and commodious dwelling at the distance of about three miles from the village, determined to abandon the habitation of his ancestors. As he cut down at the same time an ancient rookery (perhaps to defray the expenses of the migration), it became a common remark among the country folk that the decay of St. Ronan's began when Laird Lawrence and the crows flew off.

The deserted mansion, however, was not consigned to owls and birds of the desert; on the contrary, for many years it witnessed more fun and festivity than when it had been the sombre abode of a grave Scottish baron of 'auld lang syne.' In short, it was converted into an inn, and marked by a huge sign, representing on the one side St. Ronan catching hold of the devil's game leg with his episcopal crook, as the story may be read in his veracious legend, and on the other the Mowbray arms. It was by far the best frequented public-house in that vicinity; and a thousand stories were told of the revels which had been held within its walls, and the gambols achieved under the influence of its liquors. All this, however, had long since passed away, according to the lines in my frontispiece,¹

A merry place, 't was said, in days of yore;
But something ail'd it now, — the place was cursed.

The worthy couple, servants and favourites of the Mowbray family, who first kept the inn had died reasonably wealthy, after long carrying on a flourishing trade, leaving behind them an only daughter. They had acquired by degrees not only the property of the inn itself, of which they were originally tenants, but of some remarkably good meadow-land by the side of the brook, which, when touched by a little pecuniary necessity, the lairds of St. Ronan's had disposed of piecemeal as the readiest way to portion off a daughter, procure a commission for the younger son, and the like emergencies. So that Meg Dods, when she succeeded to her parents, was a considerable heiress, and, as such, had the honour of refusing three topping farmers, two bonnet-lairds, and a horse-couper, who successively made proposals to her.

Many bets were laid on the horse-couper's success; but the knowing ones were taken in. Determined to ride the fore-horse herself, Meg would admit no helpmate who might soon assert the rights of a master; and so, in single blessedness, and with the despotism of Queen Bess herself, she ruled all matters

¹ [See the motto of the novel.]

with a high hand, not only over her men-servants and maid-servants, but over the stranger within her gates, who, if he ventured to oppose Meg's sovereign will and pleasure, or desire to have either fare or accommodation different from that which she chose to provide for him, was instantly ejected with that answer which Erasmus tells us silenced all complaints in the German inns of his time, '*Quære aliud hospitium*';¹ or, as Meg expressed it, 'Troop aff wi' ye to another public.' As this amounted to a banishment in extent equal to sixteen miles from Meg's residence, the unhappy party on whom it was passed had no other refuge save by deprecating the wrath of his landlady, and resigning himself to her will. It is but justice to Meg Dods to state that, though hers was a severe and almost despotic government, it could not be termed a tyranny, since it was exercised, upon the whole, for the good of the subject.

The vaults of the old laird's cellar had not, even in his own day, been replenished with more excellent wines; the only difficulty was to prevail on Meg to look for the precise liquor you chose; to which it may be added, that she often became restiff when she thought a company had had 'as much as did them good,' and refused to furnish any more supplies. Then her kitchen was her pride and glory: she looked to the dressing of every dish herself, and there were some with which she suffered no one to interfere. Such were the cock-a-leeky, and the savoury minced collops, which rivalled in their way even the veal cutlets of our old friend Mrs. Hall, at Ferrybridge. Meg's table-linen, bed-linen, and so forth were always home-made, of the best quality, and in the best order; and a weary day was that to the chambermaid in which her lynx eye discovered any neglect of the strict cleanliness which she constantly enforced. Indeed, considering Meg's country and calling, we were never able to account for her extreme and scrupulous nicety, unless by supposing that it afforded her the most apt and frequent pretext for scolding her maids—an exercise in which she displayed so much eloquence and energy, that we must needs believe it to have been a favourite one.²

We have only further to commemorate the moderation of Meg's reckonings, which, when they closed the banquet, often

¹ In a colloquy of Erasmus called *Diversaria*, there is a very unsavoury description of a German inn of the period, where an objection of the guest is answered in the manner expressed in the text—a great sign of want of competition on the road.

² This circumstance shows of itself that the Meg Dods of the tale cannot be identified with her namesake Jenny Dods, who kept the inn at Howgate, on the Peebles road; for Jenny, far different from our heroine, was unmatched as a slattern.

relieved the apprehensions, instead of saddening the heart, of the rising guest. A shilling for breakfast, three shillings for dinner, including a pint of old port, eighteenpence for a snug supper — such were the charges of the inn of St. Ronan's, under this landlady of the olden world, even after the 19th century had commenced; and they were ever tendered with the pious recollection, that her good father never charged half so much, but these weary times rendered it impossible for her to make the lawing less.¹

Notwithstanding all these excellent and rare properties, the inn at St. Ronan's shared the decay of the village to which it belonged. This was owing to various circumstances. The highroad had been turned aside from the place, the steepness of the street being murder (so the postilions declared) to their post-horses. It was thought that Meg's stern refusal to treat them with liquor, or to connive at their exchanging for porter and whisky the corn which should feed their cattle, had no small influence on the opinion of those respectable gentlemen, and that a little cutting and levelling would have made the ascent easy enough; but let that pass. This alteration of the highway was an injury which Meg did not easily forgive to the country gentlemen, most of whom she had recollected when children. 'Their fathers,' she said, 'wad not have done the like of it to a lone woman.' Then the decay of the village itself, which had formerly contained a set of feuars and bonnet-lairds, who, under the name of the Chirupping Club, contrived to drink twopenny, qualified with brandy or whisky, at least twice or thrice a-week, was some small loss.

The temper and manners of the landlady scared away all customers of that numerous class who will not allow originality to be an excuse for the breach of decorum, and who, little accustomed perhaps to attendance at home, love to play the great man at an inn, and to have a certain number of bows, deferential speeches, and apologies, in answer to the 'G—d d—n ye's' which they bestow on the house, attendance, and entertainment. Unto those who commenced this sort of barter in the clachan of St. Ronan's, well could Meg Dods pay it back in their own coin; and glad they were to escape from the house with eyes not quite scratched out, and ears not more deafened than if they had been within hearing of a pitched battle.

Nature had formed honest Meg for such encounters; and as her noble soul delighted in them, so her outward properties

¹ See Inn Charges. Note 2.

were in what Tony Lumpkin calls a concatenation accordingly. She had hair of a brindled colour, betwixt black and grey, which was apt to escape in elf-locks from under her mutch when she was thrown into violent agitation, long skinny hands, terminated by stout talons, grey eyes, thin lips, a robust person, a broad, though flat, chest, capital wind, and a voice that could match a choir of fishwomen. She was accustomed to say of herself in her more gentle moods, that her bark was worse than her bite; but what teeth could have matched a tongue which, when in full career, is vouched to have been heard from the kirk to the castle of St. Ronan's?

These notable gifts, however, had no charms for the travellers of these light and giddy-paced times, and Meg's inn became less and less frequented. What carried the evil to the uttermost was that a fanciful lady of rank in the neighbourhood chanced to recover of some imaginary complaint by the use of a mineral well about a mile and a half from the village; a fashionable doctor was found to write an analysis of the healing waters, with a list of sundry cures; a speculative builder took land in feu,¹ and erected lodging-houses, shops, and even streets. At length a tontine subscription was obtained to erect an inn, which, for the more grace, was called a hotel; and so the desertion of Meg Dods became general.

She had still, however, her friends and well-wishers, many of whom thought that, as she was a lone woman, and known to be well to pass in the world, she would act wisely to retire from public life, and take down a sign which had no longer fascination for guests. But Meg's spirit scorned submission, direct or implied. 'Her father's door,' she said, 'should be open to the road till her father's bairn should be streekit and carried out at it with her feet foremost. It was not for the profit—there was little profit at it; profit! there was a dead loss—but she wad not be dung by any of them. They maun hae a hottle,² maun they? and an honest public canna serve them! They may hottle that likes; but they shall see that Luckie Dods can hottle on as lang as the best of them—ay, though they had made a tamteen of it, and linkit aw their breaths of lives, whilk are in their nostrils, on end of ilk other like a string of wild geese, and the langest liver bruick a'—whilk was sinful presumption—she would match ilk ane of them as

¹ See Building Feus in Scotland. Note 3.

² This Gallic word (*hôte*) was first introduced in Scotland during the Author's childhood, and was so pronounced by the lower class.

lang as her ain wind held out.' Fortunate it was for Meg, since she had formed this doughty resolution, that, although her inn had decayed in custom, her land had risen in value in a degree which more than compensated the balance on the wrong side of her books, and, joined to her usual providence and economy, enabled her to act up to her lofty purpose.

She prosecuted her trade too with every attention to its diminished income; shut up the windows of one half of her house to baffle the tax-gatherer, retrenched her furniture, discharged her pair of post-horses, and pensioned off the old humpbacked postilion who drove them, retaining his services, however, as an assistant to a still more aged hostler. To console herself for restrictions by which her pride was secretly wounded, she agreed with the celebrated Dick Tinto to repaint her father's sign, which had become rather undecipherable; and Dick accordingly gilded the bishop's crook, and augmented the horrors of the devil's aspect, until it became a terror to all the younger fry of the school-house, and a sort of visible illustration of the terrors of the arch-enemy, with which the minister endeavoured to impress their infant minds.

Under this renewed symbol of her profession, Meg Dods, or Meg Dorts, as she was popularly termed, on account of her refractory humours, was still patronised by some steady customers. Such were the members of the Killnakelty Hunt, once famous on the turf and in the field, but now a set of venerable grey-headed sportsmen, who had sunk from foxhounds to basket-beagles and coursing, and who made an easy canter on their quiet nags a gentle induction to a dinner at Meg's. 'A set of honest, decent men they were,' Meg said; 'had their sang and their joke, and what for no? Their bind was just a Scots pint overhead, and a tappit-hen to the bill, and no man ever saw them the waur o't. It was thae cockle-brained callants of the present day that would be mair owerta'en with a puir quart than douce folk were with a magnum.'

Then there was a set of ancient brethren of the angle from Edinburgh, who visited St. Ronan's frequently in the spring and summer, a class of guests peculiarly acceptable to Meg, who permitted them more latitude in her premises than she was known to allow to any other body. 'They were,' she said, 'pawky auld carles, that kenn'd whilk side their bread was buttered upon. Ye never kenn'd of ony o' them ganging to the spring, as they behoved to ca' the stinking well yonder. Na — na, they were up in the morning, had their parritch, wi' maybe



MEG DODS.

From a painting by George Reid, R.S.A.

a thimbleful of brandy, and then awa' up into the hills, eat their bit cauld meat on the heather, and came hame at e'en with the creel full of caller trouts, and had them to their dinner, and their quiet cogue of ale, and their drap punch, and were set singing their catches and glees, as they ca'd them, till ten o'clock, and then to bed, wi' "God bless ye"—and what for no?

Thirdly, we may commemorate some ranting blades, who also came from the metropolis to visit St. Ronan's, attracted by the humours of Meg, and still more by the excellence of her liquor and the cheapness of her reckonings. These were members of the Helter Skelter Club, of the Wildfire Club, and other associations formed for the express purpose of getting rid of care and sobriety. Such dashers occasioned many a racket in Meg's house, and many a *bourasque* in Meg's temper. Various were the arts of flattery and violence by which they endeavoured to get supplies of liquor, when Meg's conscience told her they had had too much already. Sometimes they failed, as when the croupier of the Helter Skelter got himself scalded with the mulled wine in an unsuccessful attempt to coax this formidable virago by a salute; and the excellent president of the Wildfire received a broken head from the keys of the cellar, as he endeavoured to possess himself of these emblems of authority. But little did these dauntless officials care for the exuberant frolics of Meg's temper, which were to them only 'pretty Fanny's way'—the *dulces Amaryllidis iræ*. And Meg, on her part, though she often called them 'drunken ne'er-do-weels, and thoroughbred High Street blackguards,' allowed no other person to speak ill of them in her hearing. 'They were daft callants,' she said, 'and that was all; when the drink was in, the wit was out; ye could not put an auld head upon young shouthers: a young cowl will canter, be it uphill or down—and what for no?' was her uniform conclusion.

Nor must we omit, among Meg's steady customers, 'faithful amongst the unfaithful found,' the copper-nosed sheriff-clerk of the county, who, when summoned by official duty to that district of the shire, warmed by recollections of her double-brewed ale and her generous Antigua, always advertised that his 'prieves,' or 'comptis,' or whatever other business was in hand, were to proceed on such a day and hour, 'within the house of Margaret Dods, vintner in St. Ronan's.'

We have only farther to notice Meg's mode of conducting herself towards chance travellers, who, knowing nothing of nearer or more fashionable accommodations, or perhaps consult-

ing rather the state of their purse than of their taste, stumbled upon her house of entertainment. Her reception of these was as precarious as the hospitality of a savage nation to sailors shipwrecked on their coast. If the guests seemed to have made her mansion their free choice; or if she liked their appearance (and her taste was very capricious); above all, if they seemed pleased with what they got, and little disposed to criticise or give trouble, it was all very well. But if they had come to St. Ronan's because the house at the Well was full; or if she disliked what the sailor calls the cut of their jib; or if, above all, they were critical about their accommodations, none so likely as Meg to give them what in her country is called a 'sloan.' In fact, she reckoned such persons a part of that ungenerous and ungrateful public for whose sake she was keeping her house open at a dead loss, and who had left her, as it were, a victim to her patriotic zeal.

Hence arose the different reports concerning the little inn of St. Ronan's, which some favoured travellers praised as the neatest and most comfortable old-fashioned house in Scotland, where you had good attendance and good cheer at moderate rates; while others, less fortunate, could only talk of the darkness of the rooms, the homeliness of the old furniture, and the detestable bad humour of Meg Dods, the landlady.

Reader, if you come from the more sunny side of the Tweed, or even if, being a Scot, you have had the advantage to be born within the last twenty-five years, you may be induced to think this portrait of Queen Elizabeth, in Dame Quickly's piqued hat and green apron, somewhat overcharged in the features. But I appeal to my own contemporaries, who have known wheel-road, bridle-way, and footpath for thirty years, whether they do not, every one of them, remember Meg Dods—or somebody very like her. Indeed, so much is this the case that, about the period I mention, I should have been afraid to have rambled from the Scottish metropolis in almost any direction, lest I had lighted upon some one of the sisterhood of Dame Quickly, who might suspect me of having showed her up to the public in the character of Meg Dods. At present, though it is possible that some one or two of this peculiar class of wildcats may still exist, their talons must be much impaired by age; and I think they can do little more than sit, like the Giant Pope in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, at the door of their unfrequented caverns, and grin at the pilgrims over whom they used formerly to execute their despotism.

CHAPTER II

The Guest

Quis novus hic hospes ?

Dido apud Virgilium.

Ch'am-maid ! The gemman in the front parlour !

Boor's Free Translation of the Æneid.

IT was on a fine summer's day that a solitary traveller rode under the old-fashioned archway, and alighted in the courtyard of Meg Dod's inn, and delivered the bridle of his horse to the humpbacked postilion. 'Bring my saddle-bags,' he said, 'into the house ; or stay — I am abler, I think, to carry them than you.' He then assisted the poor meagre groom to unbuckle the straps which secured the humble and now despised convenience, and meantime gave strict charges that his horse should be unbridled, and put into a clean and comfortable stall, the girths slacked, and a cloth cast over his loins, but that the saddle should not be removed until he himself came to see him dressed.

The companion of his travels seemed in the hostler's eye deserving of his care, being a strong active horse, fit either for the road or field, but rather high in bone from a long journey, though from the state of his skin it appeared the utmost care had been bestowed to keep him in condition. While the groom obeyed the stranger's directions, the latter, with the saddle-bags laid over his arm, entered the kitchen of the inn.

Here he found the landlady herself in none of her most blessed humours. The cook-maid was abroad on some errand, and Meg, in a close review of the kitchen apparatus, was making the unpleasant discovery that trenchers had been broken or cracked, pots and saucepans not so accurately scoured as her precise notions of cleanliness required, which, joined to other detections of a more petty description, stirred her bile in no small degree ; so that, while she disarranged and arranged

the 'bink,' she maundered, in an undertone, complaints and menaces against the absent delinquent.

The entrance of a guest did not induce her to suspend this agreeable amusement : she just glanced at him as he entered, then turned her back short on him, and continued her labour and her soliloquy of lamentation. Truth is, she thought she recognised in the person of the stranger one of those useful envoys of the commercial community, called by themselves and the waiters 'travellers' *par excellence*, by others riders and bagmen. Now against this class of customers Meg had peculiar prejudices ; because, there being no shops in the old village of St. Ronan's, the said commercial emissaries, for the convenience of their traffic, always took up their abode at the new inn, or hotel, in the rising and rival village called St. Ronan's Well, unless when some straggler, by chance or dire necessity, was compelled to lodge himself at the Auld Town, as the place of Meg's residence began to be generally termed. She had, therefore, no sooner formed the hasty conclusion that the individual in question belonged to this obnoxious class than she resumed her former occupation, and continued to soliloquise and apostrophise her absent handmaidens, without even appearing sensible of his presence.

'The huzzy Beenie — the jaud Eppie — the deil's buckie of a callant ! Another plate gane ; they'll break me out of house and ha' !'

The traveller, who, with his saddle-bags rested on the back of a chair, had waited in silence for some note of welcome, now saw that, ghost or no ghost, he must speak first, if he intended to have any notice from his landlady.

'You are my old acquaintance, Mrs. Margaret Dods ?' said the stranger.

'What for no ? and wha are ye that speers ?' said Meg, in the same breath, and began to rub a brass candlestick with more vehemence than before, the dry tone in which she spoke indicating plainly how little concern she took in the conversation.

'A traveller, good Mistress Dods, who comes to take up his lodgings here for a day or two.'

'I am thinking ye will be mista'en,' said Meg ; 'there's nae room for bags or jaugs here. Ye've mista'en your road, neighbour : ye maun e'en bundle yoursell a bit farther downhill.'

'I see you have not got the letter I sent you, Mistress Dods,' said the guest.

'How should I, man?' answered the hostess; 'they have ta'en awa' the post-office from us — moved it down till the Spa Well yonder, as they ca't.'

'Why, that is but a step off,' observed the guest.

'Ye will get there the sooner,' answered the hostess.

'Nay, but,' said the guest, 'if you had sent there for my letter, you would have learned ——'

'I'm no wanting to learn onything at my years,' said Meg. 'If folk have onything to write to me about, they may gie the letter to John Hislop, the carrier, that has used the road these forty years. As for the letters at the post-mistress's, as they ca' her, down-bye yonder, they may bide in her shop-window, wi' the snaps and bawbee rows, till Beltane, or I loose them. I'll never file my fingers with them. Post-mistress, indeed! Upsetting cutty! I mind her fu' weel when she dree'd penance for ante-nup——'

Laughing, but interrupting Meg in good time for the character of the post-mistress, the stranger assured her he had sent his fishing-rod and trunk to her confidential friend the carrier, and that he sincerely hoped she would not turn an old acquaintance out of her premises, especially as he believed he could not sleep in a bed within five miles of St. Ronan's, if he knew that her Blue Room was unengaged.

'Fishing-rod! — auld acquaintance! — Blue Room!' echoed Meg, in some surprise; and, facing round upon the stranger, and examining him with some interest and curiosity, 'Ye'll be nae bagman, then, after a'?'

'No,' said the traveller; 'not since I have laid the saddle-bags out of my hand.'

'Weel, I canna say but I am glad of that. I canna bide their yanking way of knapping English at every word. I have kent decent lads amang them too — what for no? But that was when they stopped up here whiles, like other douce folk; but since they gaed down, the hail flight of them, like a string of wild geese, to the new-fashioned hottle yonder, I am told there are as mony hellicate tricks played in the travellers' room, as they behove to call it, as if it were fu' of drunken young lairds.'

'That is because they have not you to keep good order amang them, Mistress Margaret.'

'Ay, lad?' replied Meg, 'ye are a fine blaw-in-my-lug, to think to cuittle me off sae cleverly!' And, facing about upon her guest, she honoured him with a more close and curious

investigation than she had at first designed to bestow upon him.

All that she remarked was in her opinion rather favourable to the stranger. He was a well-made man, rather above than under the middle size, and apparently betwixt five-and-twenty and thirty years of age; for, although he might at first glance have passed for one who had attained the latter period, yet, on a nearer examination, it seemed as if the burning sun of a warmer climate than Scotland, and perhaps some fatigue, both of body and mind, had imprinted the marks of care and of manhood upon his countenance, without abiding the course of years. His eyes and teeth were excellent, and his other features, though they could scarce be termed handsome, expressed sense and acuteness; he bore, in his aspect, that ease and composure of manner, equally void of awkwardness and affectation, which is said emphatically to mark the gentleman; and, although neither the plainness of his dress nor the total want of the usual attendants allowed Meg to suppose him a wealthy man, she had little doubt that he was above the rank of her lodgers in general. Amidst these observations, and while she was in the course of making them, the good landlady was embarrassed with various obscure recollections of having seen the object of them formerly; but when or on what occasion she was quite unable to call to remembrance. She was particularly puzzled by the cold and sarcastic expression of a countenance which she could not by any means reconcile with the recollections which it awakened. At length she said, with as much courtesy as she was capable of assuming — ‘Either I have seen you before, sir, or some ane very like ye? Ye ken the Blue Room, too, and you a stranger in these parts?’

‘Not so much a stranger as you may suppose, Meg,’ said the guest, assuming a more intimate tone, ‘when I call myself Frank Tyrrel.’

‘Tirl!’ exclaimed Meg, with a tone of wonder. ‘It’s impossible! You cannot be Francie Tirl, the wild callant that was fishing and bird-nesting here seven or eight years syne — it canna be; Francie was but a callant!’

‘But add seven or eight years to that boy’s life, Meg,’ said the stranger, gravely, ‘and you will find you have the man who is now before you.’

‘Even sae!’ said Meg, with a glance at the reflection of her own countenance in the copper coffee-pot, which she had scoured so brightly that it did the office of a mirror — ‘just e’en sae;

but folk maun grow auld or die. But, Maister Tirl, for I mauna ca' ye "Francie" now, I am thinking——'

'Call me what you please, good dame,' said the stranger; 'it has been so long since I heard any one call me by a name that sounded like former kindness, that such a one is more agreeable to me than a lord's title would be.'

'Weel, then, Maister Francie — if it be no offence to you — I hope ye are no a nabob?'

'Not I, I can safely assure you, my old friend; but what an I were?'

'Naething — only maybe I might bid ye gang farther and be waur served. Nabobs, indeed! the country's plagued wi' them. They have raised the price of eggs and pootry for twenty miles round. But what is my business? They use amaist a' of them the Well down-bye; they need it, ye ken, for the clearing of their copper complexions, that need scouring as much as my saucepans, that naeboddy can clean but mysell.'

'Well, my good friend,' said Tyrrel, 'the upshot of all this is, I hope, that I am to stay and have dinner here?'

'What for no?' replied Mrs. Dodds.

'And that I am to have the Blue Room for a night or two — perhaps longer?'

'I dinna ken that,' said the dame. 'The Blue Room is the best, and they that get neist best are no ill aff in this warld.'

'Arrange it as you will,' said the stranger; 'I leave the whole matter to you, mistress. Meantime, I will go see after my horse.'

'The merciful man,' said Meg, when her guest had left the kitchen, 'is merciful to his beast. He had aye something about him by ordinar, that callant. But eh, sirs! there is a sair change on his cheek-haffit since I saw him last! He sall no want a good dinner for auld lang syne, that I'se engage for.'

Meg set about the necessary preparations with all the natural energy of her disposition, which was so much exerted upon her culinary cares that her two maids, on their return to the house, escaped the bitter reprimand which she had been previously conning over in reward for their alleged slatternly negligence. Nay, so far did she carry her complaisance, that when Tyrrel crossed the kitchen to recover his saddle-bags, she formally rebuked Eppie 'for an idle tawpie, for not carrying the gentleman's things to his room.'

'I thank you, mistress,' said Tyrrel; 'but I have some

drawings and colours in these saddle-bags, and I always like to carry them myself.'

'Ay, and are you at the painting trade yet?' said Meg; 'an unco slaister ye used to make with it lang syne.'

'I cannot live without it,' said Tyrrel; and taking the saddle-bags, was formally inducted by the maid into a snug apartment, where he soon had the satisfaction to behold a capital dish of minced collops, with vegetables, and a jug of excellent ale, placed on the table by the careful hand of Meg herself. He could do no less, in acknowledgment of the honour, than ask Meg for a bottle of the yellow seal, 'if there was any of that excellent claret still left.'

'Left! ay is there, walth of it,' said Meg; 'I dinna gie it to everybody. Ah! Maister 'Tirl, ye have not got ower your auld tricks! I am sure, if ye are painting for your leeing, as you say, a little rum and water would come cheaper, and do ye as much good. But ye maun hae your ain way the day, nae doubt, if ye should never have it again.'

Away trudged Meg, her keys clattering as she went, and, after much rummaging, returned with such a bottle of claret as no fashionable tavern could have produced, were it called for by a duke, or at a duke's price; and she seemed not a little gratified when her guest assured her that he had not yet forgotten its excellent flavour. She retired after these acts of hospitality, and left the stranger to enjoy in quiet the excellent matters which she had placed before him.

But there was that on Tyrrel's mind which defied the enlivening power of good cheer and of wine, which only maketh man's heart glad when that heart has no secret oppression to counteract its influence. Tyrrel found himself on a spot which he had loved in that delightful season when youth and high spirits awaken all those flattering promises which are so ill kept to manhood. He drew his chair into the embrasure of the old-fashioned window, and throwing up the sash to enjoy the fresh air, suffered his thoughts to return to former days, while his eyes wandèred over objects which they had not looked upon for several eventful years. He could behold beneath his eye the lower part of the decayed village, as its ruins peeped from the umbrageous shelter with which they were shrouded. Still lower down, upon the little holm which formed its churchyard, was seen the kirk of St. Ronan's; and looking yet farther, towards the junction of St. Ronan's burn with the river which traversed the larger dale or valley, he could see, whitened by

the western sun, the rising houses, which were either newly finished or in the act of being built, about the medicinal spring.

'Time changes all around us,' such was the course of natural though trite reflection which flowed upon Tyrrel's mind; 'wherefore should loves and friendships have a longer date than our dwellings and our monuments?' As he indulged these sombre recollections, his officious landlady disturbed their tenor by her entrance.

'I was thinking to offer you a dish of tea, Maister Francie, just for the sake of auld lang syne, and I'll gar the quean Beenie bring it here and mask it mysell. But ye arena done with your wine yet?'

'I am indeed, Mrs. Dods,' answered Tyrrel; 'and I beg you will remove the bottle.'

'Remove the bottle, and the wine no half drank out!' said Meg, displeasure lowering on her brow. 'I hope there is nae fault to be found wi' the wine, Maister Tirl?'

To this answer, which was put in a tone resembling defiance, Tyrrel submissively replied, by declaring 'the claret not only unexceptionable, but excellent.'

'And what for dinna ye drink it, then?' said Meg, sharply. 'Folk should never ask for mair liquor than they can make a gude use of. Maybe ye think we have the fashion of the table-dot, as they ca' their newfangled ordinary down-bye yonder, where a' the bits of vinegar cruets are put awa' into an awmry, as they tell me, and ilk ane wi' the bit dribbles of syndings in it, and a paper about the neck o't, to show which of the customers is aught it; there they stand like doctors' drogs, and no an honest Scottish mutchkin will ane o' their vials haud, granting it were at the fouest.'

'Perhaps,' said Tyrrel, willing to indulge the spleen and prejudice of his old acquaintance — 'perhaps the wine is not so good as to make full measure desirable.'

'Ye may say that, lad; and yet them that sell it might afford a gude pennyworth, for they hae it for the making: maist feck of it ne'er saw France or Portugal. But as I was saying — this is no ane of their newfangled places, where wine is put by for them that canna drink it: when the cork's drawn, the bottle maun be drank out — and what for no? — unless it be corkit.'

'I agree entirely, Meg,' said her guest; 'but my ride to-day has somewhat heated me, and I think the dish of tea you promise me will do me more good than to finish my bottle.'

'Na, then, the best I can do for you is to put it by, to be

sauce for the wild duck the morn; for I think ye said ye were to bide here for a day or twa.'

'It is my very purpose, Meg, unquestionably,' replied Tyrrel.

'Sae be it then,' said Mrs. Dods; 'and then the liquor's no lost. It has been seldom sic claret as that has simmered in a saucepan, let me tell you that, neighbour; and I mind the day when, headache or nae headache, ye wad hae been at the hinder-end of that bottle, and maybe anither, if ye could have gotten it wiled out of me. But then ye had your cousin to help you. Ah! he was a blythe bairn that Valentine Bulmer! Ye were a canty callant too, Maister Francie, and muckle ado I had to keep ye baith in order when ye were on the ramble. But ye were a thought doucer than Valentine. But O! he was a bonny laddie! wi' een like diamonds, cheeks like roses, a head like a heather-tap — he was the first I ever saw wear a crap, as they ca' it, but a'body cheats the barber now — and he had a laugh that wad hae raised the dead! What wi' flyting on him and what wi' laughing at him, there was nae minding ony other body when that Valentine was in the house. And how is your cousin Valentine Bulmer, Maister Francie?'

Tyrrel looked down, and only answered with a sigh.

'Ay, and is it even sae?' said Meg; 'and has the puir bairn been sae soon removed frae this fashious warld? Ay — ay, we maun a' gang ae gate: crackit quart-stoups and geisen'd barrels — leaky quaighs are we a', and canna keep in the liquor of life. Ohon, sirs! Was the puir lad Bulmer frae Bu'mer Bay, where they land the Hollands, think ye, Maister Francie? They whiles rin in a pickle tea there too. I hope that is good that I have made you, Maister Francie?'

'Excellent, my good dame,' said Tyrrel; but it was in a tone of voice which intimated that she had pressed upon a subject that awakened some unpleasant reflections.

'And when did this puir lad die?' continued Meg, who was not without her share of Eve's qualities, and wished to know something concerning what seemed to affect her guest so particularly; but he disappointed her purpose, and at the same time awakened another train of sentiment in her mind, by turning again to the window, and looking upon the distant buildings of St. Ronan's Well. As if he had observed for the first time these new objects, he said to Mrs. Dods in an indifferent tone, 'You have got some gay new neighbours yonder, mistress.'

'Neighbours!' said Meg, her wrath beginning to arise, as it

always did upon any allusion to this sore subject. 'Ye may ca' them neighbours, if ye like; but the deil flee awa' wi' the neighbourhood for Meg Dods!'

'I suppose,' said Tyrrel, as if he did not observe her displeasure, 'that yonder is the Fox Hotel they told me of?'

'The Fox!' said Meg: 'I am sure it is the fox that has carried off a' my geese. I might shut up house, Maister Francie, if it was the thing I lived by — me, that has seen a' our gentlefolk bairns, and gien them snaps and sugar-biscuit maist of them wi' my ain hand! They wad hae seen my father's roof-tree fa' down and smoor me before they wad hae gien a boddle a-piece to have propped it up; but they could a' link out their fifty pounds owerhead to bigg a hottle at the Well yonder. And muckle they hae made o't: the bankrupt body, Sandie Lawson, hasna paid them a bawbee of four terms' rent.'

'Surely, mistress, I think, if the Well became so famous for its cures, the least the gentlemen could have done was to make you the priestess.'

'Me priestess! I am nae Quaker, I wot, Maister Francie; and I never heard of alewife that turned preacher, except Luckie Buchan in the west.¹ And if I were to preach, I think I have mair the spirit of a Scottishwoman than to preach in the very room they hae been dancing in ilka night in the week, Saturday itsell not excepted, and that till twal o'clock at night. Na — na, Maister Francie; I leave the like o' that to Mr. Simon Chatterly, as they ca' the bit prelatical sprig of divinity from the town yonder, that plays at cards and dances six days in the week, and on the seventh reads the Common Prayer Book in the ball-room, with Tam Simson, the drunken barber, for his clerk.'

'I think I have heard of Mr. Chatterly,' said Tyrrel.

'Ye'll be thinking o' the sermon he has printed,' said the angry dame, 'where he compares their nasty puddle of a Well yonder to the pool of Bethesda, like a foul-mouthed, fleecing, feather-headed fule as he is! He should hae kenn'd that the place got a' its fame in the times of black Popery; and though they pat it in St. Ronan's name, I'll never believe for one that the honest man had ony hand in it; for I hae been tell'd by ane that suld ken that he was nae Roman, but only a Cuddie,

¹ The foundress of a sect called Buchanites; a species of Joanna Southcote, who long after death was expected to return and head her disciples on the road to Jerusalem.

or Culdee, or such-like. But will ye not take anither dish of tea, Maister Francie, and a wee bit of the diet-loaf, raised wi' my ain fressh butter, Maister Francie, and no wi' greasy kitchen-fee, like the seedcake down at the confectioner's yonder, that has as mony dead flees as carvy in it? Set him up for a confectioner! Wi' a pennyworth of rye-meal, and anither of tryacle, and twa or three carvy-seeds, I will make better confections than ever cam out of his oven.'

'I have no doubt of that, Mrs. Dods,' said the guest; 'and I only wish to know how these newcomers were able to establish themselves against a house of such good reputation and old standing as yours? It was the virtues of the mineral, I daresay; but how came the waters to recover a character all at once, mistress?'

'I dinna ken, sir; they used to be thought good for nae-thing, but here and there for a puir body's bairn, that had gotten the cruells, and could not afford a pennyworth of salts. But my Leddy Penelope Penfeather had fa'an ill, it's like, as nae other body ever fell ill, and sae she was to be cured some gate naebody was ever cured, which was naething mair than was reasonable; and my leddy, ye ken, has wit at wull, and has a' the wise folk out from Edinburgh at her house at Windywa's yonder, which it is her leddyship's wull and pleasure to call Air Castle; and they have a' their different turns, and some can clink verses wi' their tale as weel as Rob Burns or Allan Ramsay; and some rin up hill and down dale, knapping the chucky stanes to pieces wi' hammers, like sae mony road-makers run daft — they say it is to see how the warld was made! — and some that play on all manner of ten-stringed instruments; and a wheen sketching souls, that ye may see perched like craws on every craig in the country, e'en working at your ain trade, Maister Francie; forbye men that had been in foreign parts, or said they had been there, whilk is a' ane, ye ken; and maybe twa or three draggletailed misses, that wear my Leddy Penelope's follies when she has dune wi' them, as her queans of maids wear her second-hand claithe. So, after her leddyship's happy recovery, as they ca'd it, down cam the hail tribe of wild geese, and settled by the Well, to dine thereout on the bare grund, like a wheen tinklers; and they had sangs, and tunes, and healths, nae doubt, in praise of the fountain, as they ca'd the Well, and of Leddy Penelope Penfeather; and, lastly, they behoved a' to take a solemn bumper of the spring, which, as I'm tauld, made unco havoc amang them or they wan

hame; and this they ca'd picknick, and a plague to them! And sae the jig was begun after her leddyship's pipe, and mony a mad measure has been danced sin' syne; for down cam masons and murgeon-makers, and preachers and player-folk, and Episcopalians and Methodists, and fools and fiddlers, and Papists and pie-bakers, and doctors and drugsters, bye the shop-folk, that sell trash and trumpery at three prices; and so up got the bonny new Well, and down fell the honest auld town of St. Ronan's, where blythe decent folk had been heart-some enugh for mony a day before ony o' them were born, or ony sic vapouring fancies kittled in their cracked brains.'

'What said your landlord, the laird of St. Ronan's, to all this?' said Tyrrel.

'Is't *my* landlord ye are asking after, Maister Francie? The laird of St. Ronan's is nae landlord of mine, and I think ye might hae minded that. Na — na, thanks be to Praise! Meg Dods is baith *landlord* and *landladdy*. Ill enugh to keep the doors open as it is, let be facing Whitsunday and Martinmas. An auld leather pock there is, Maister Francie, in ane of worthy Maister Bindloose the sheriff-clerk's pigeon-holes, in his dowcot of a closet in the burgh; and therein is baith charter and sasine, and special service to boot; and that will be chapter and verse, speer when ye list.'

'I had quite forgotten,' said Tyrrel, 'that the inn was your own; though I remember you were a considerable landed proprietor.'

'Maybe I am,' replied Meg, 'maybe I am not; and if I be, what for no? But as to what the laird, whose grandfather was my father's landlord, said to the new doings yonder — he just jumped at the ready penny, like a cock at a grosert, and feu'd the bonny holm beside the Well, that they ca'd the Saint Well Holm, that was like the best land in his aught, to be carved, and biggit, and howkit up, just at the pleasure of Jock Ashler the stanemason, that ca's himsell an arkiteck — there's nae living for new words in this new warld neither, and that is another vex to auld folk such as me. It's a shame o' the young laird, to let his auld patrimony gang the gate it's like to gang, and my heart is sair to see't, though it has but little cause to care what comes of him or his.'

'Is it the same Mr. Mowbray,' said Mr. Tyrrel, 'who still holds the estate — the old gentleman, you know, whom I had some dispute with — ?'

'About hunting moorfowl upon the Springwell Head muirs?'

said Meg. 'Ah, lad! honest Mr. Bindloose brought you neatly off there. Na, it's no that honest man, but his son John Mowbray; the t'other has slept down-bye in St. Ronan's kirk for these six or seven years.'

'Did he leave,' asked Tyrrel, with something of a faltering voice, 'no other child than the present laird?'

'No other son,' said Meg; 'and there's e'en eneugh, unless he could have left a better ane.'

'He died then,' said Tyrrel, 'excepting this son, without children?'

'By your leave, no,' said Meg; 'there is the lassie Miss Clara, that keeps house for the laird, if it can be ca'd keeping house, for he is almost aye down at the Well yonder—so a sma' kitchen serves them at the Shaws.'

'Miss Clara will have but a dull time of it there during her brother's absence?' said the stranger.

'Out no! he has her aften jinketing about, and back and forward, wi' a' the fine flichtering fools that come yonder; and clapping palms wi' them, and linking at their dances and daffings. I wuss nae ill come o't, but it's a shame her father's daughter should keep company wi' a' that scauff and raff of physic-students, and writers' prentices, and bagmen, and sic-like trash as are down at the Well yonder.'

'You are severe, Mrs. Dods,' replied the guest. 'No doubt Miss Clara's conduct deserves all sort of freedom.'

'I am saying naething against her conduct,' said the dame; 'and there's nae ground to say onything that I ken of. But I wad hae like draw to like, Maister Francie. I never quarrelled the ball that the gentry used to hae at my bit house a gude wheen years byegane, when they came, the auld folk in their coaches, wi' lang-tailed black horses, and a wheen galliard gallants on their hunting horses, and mony a decent leddy behind her ain goodman, and mony a bonny smirking lassie on her pownie, and, wha sae happy as they?—and what for no? And then there was the farmers' ball, wi' the tight lads of yeomen with the bran new blues and the buckskins. These were decent meetings; but then they were a' ae man's bairns that were at them; ilk ane kenn'd ilk other; they danced farmers wi' farmers' daughters at the tane, and gentles wi' gentle blood at the t'other, unless maybe when some of the gentlemen of the Killnakelty Club would gie me a round of the floor mysell, in the way of daffing and fun, and me no able to flyte on them for laughing. I am sure I never grudged these

innocent pleasures, although it has cost me maybe a week's redding up ere I got the better of the confusion.'

'But, dame,' said Tyrrel, 'this ceremonial would be a little hard upon strangers like myself, for how were we to find partners in these family parties of yours?'

'Never you fash your thumb about that, Maister Francie,' returned the landlady, with a knowing wink. 'Every Jack will find a Jill, gang the world as it may; and, at the warst o't, better hae some fashery in finding a partner for the night than get yoked with ane that you may not be able to shake off the morn.'

'And does that sometimes happen?' asked the stranger.

'Happen! and is't amang the Well folk that ye mean?' exclaimed the hostess. 'Was it not the last season, as they ca't, no farther gane, that young Sir Bingo Binks, the English lad wi' the red coat, that keeps a mail-coach and drives it himsell, gat cleekit with Miss Rachel Bonnyrigg, the auld Leddy Loupengirth's lang-legged daughter; and they danced sae lang thegither that there was mair said than suld hae been said about it; and the lad would fain hae louped back, but the auld ledy held him to his tackle, and the Commissary Court and somebody else made her Leddy Binks in spite of Sir Bingo's heart; and he has never daured take her to his friends in England, but they have just wintered and summered it at the Well ever since; and that is what the Well is good for!'

'And does Clara—I mean does Miss Mowbray—keep company with such women as these?' said Tyrrel, with a tone of interest which he checked as he proceeded with the question.

'What can she do, puir thing?' said the dame. 'She maun keep the company that her brother keeps, for she is clearly dependent. But, speaking of that, I ken what I have to do, and that is no little, before it darkens. I have sat clavering with you ower lang, Maister Francie.'

And away she marched with a resolved step, and soon the clear octaves of her voice were heard in shrill admonition to her handmaidens.

Tyrrel paused a moment in deep thought, then took his hat, paid a visit to the stable, where his horse saluted him with feathering ears and that low amicable neigh with which that animal acknowledges the approach of a loving and beloved friend. Having seen that the faithful creature was in every respect attended to, Tyrrel availed himself of the continued and lingering twilight to visit the old castle, which, upon former

occasions, had been his favourite evening walk. He remained while the light permitted, admiring the prospect we attempted to describe in the first chapter, and comparing, as in his former reverie, the faded hues of the glimmering landscape to those of human life, when early youth and hope have ceased to gild them.

A brisk walk to the inn, and a light supper on a Welsh rabbit and the dame's home-brewed, were stimulants of livelier, at least more resigned, thoughts; and the Blue Bedroom, to the honours of which he had been promoted, received him a contented, if not a cheerful, tenant.

CHAPTER III

Administration

There must be government in all society :
Bees have their queen, and stag-herds have their leader ;
Rome had her consuls, Athens had her archons,
And we, sir, have our managing committee.

The Album of St. Roman's.

FRANCIS TYRREL was, in the course of the next day, formally settled in his old quarters, where he announced his purpose of remaining for several days. The old-established carrier of the place brought his fishing-rod and travelling-trunk, with a letter to Meg, dated a week previously, desiring her to prepare to receive an old acquaintance. This annunciation, though something of the latest, Meg received with great complacency, observing, 'It was a civil attention in Maister Tirl ; and that John Hislop, though he was not just sae fast, was far surer than ony post of them a', or express either.' She also observed with satisfaction that there was no gun-case along with her guest's baggage, 'for that weary gunning had brought him and her into trouble : the lairds had cried out upon 't, as if she made her house a howff for common fowlers and poachers ; and yet how could she hinder twa daft hempie callants from taking a start and an overloup ? They had been ower the neighbour's ground they had leave on up to the march, and they werena just to ken meiths when the moorfowl got up.'

In a day or two her guest fell into such quiet and solitary habits that Meg, herself the most restless and bustling of human creatures, began to be vexed for want of the trouble which she expected to have had with him, experiencing, perhaps, the same sort of feeling from his extreme and passive indifference on all points that a good horseman has for the over-patient steed which he can scarce feel under him. His walks were devoted to the most solitary recesses among the neighbouring woods and hills ; his fishing-rod was often left

behind him, or carried merely as an apology for sauntering slowly by the banks of some little brooklet; and his success so indifferent, that Meg said 'the piper of Peebles'¹ would have caught a creelfu' before Maister Francie made out the half-dozen'; so that he was obliged, for peace's sake, to vindicate his character by killing a handsome salmon.

Tyrrel's painting, as Meg called it, went on equally slowly. He often, indeed, showed her the sketches which he brought from his walks, and used to finish at home; but Meg held them very cheap. 'What signified,' she said, 'a wheen bits of paper, wi' black and white scarts upon them, that he ca'd bushes, and trees, and craigs? Couldna he paint them wi' green, and blue, and yellow, like the other folk? Ye will never mak your bread that way, Maister Francie. Ye suld munt up a muckle square of canvas, like Dick Tinto, and paint folks' ainsells, that they like muckle better to see than ony craig in the haill water; and I wadna muckle object even to some of the Wallers coming up and sitting to ye. They waste their time waur, I wis; and, I warrant, ye might make a guinea a-head of them. Dick made twa, but he was an auld used hand, and folk maun creep before they gang.'

In answer to these remonstrances, Tyrrel assured her that the sketches with which he busied himself were held of such considerable value, that very often an artist in that line received much higher remuneration for these than for portraits or coloured drawings. He added, that they were often taken for the purpose of illustrating popular poems, and hinted as if he himself were engaged in some labour of that nature.

Eagerly did Meg long to pour forth to Nelly Trotter, the fishwoman—whose cart formed the only neutral channel of communication between the Auld Town and the Well, and who was in favour with Meg, because, as Nelly passed her door in her way to the Well, she always had the first choice of her fish—the merits of her lodger as an artist. Luckie Dods had, in truth, been so much annoyed and bullied, as it were, with the report of clever persons, accomplished in all sorts of excellence, arriving day after day at the hotel, that she was overjoyed in this fortunate opportunity to triumph over them in their own way; and it may be believed that the excellences of her lodger lost nothing by being trumpeted through her mouth.

'I maun hae the best of the cart, Nelly, if you and me can gree, for it is for ane of the best of painters. Your fine folk

¹ The said piper was famous at the mystery.

down yonder would gie their lugs to look at what he has been doing ; he gets gowd in goupins for three downright scarts and three cross anes. And he is no an ungrateful loon, like Dick Tinto, that had nae sooner my good five-and-twenty shillings in his pocket than he gaed down to birl it awa' at their bonny hottle yonder, but a decent quiet lad, that kens when he is weel aff, and bides still at the auld howff, — and what for no ? Tell them all this, and hear what they will say till 't.'

'Indeed, mistress, I can tell ye that already, without stirring my shanks for the matter,' answered Nelly Trotter ; 'they will e'en say that ye are ae auld fule and me anither, that may hae some judgment in cock-bree or in scate-rumples, but mauna fash our beards about onything else.'

'Wad they say sae, the frontless villains, and me been a housekeeper this thirty year ?' exclaimed Meg. 'I wadna hae them say it to my face ! But I am no speaking without warrant ; for what an I had spoken to the minister, lass, and shown him ane of the loose scarts of paper that Maister Tirl leaves fleeing about his room, and what an he had said he had kenn'd Lord Bidmore gie five guineas for the waur on 't, — and a' the world kens he was lang tutor in the Bidmore family ?'

'Troth,' answered her gossip, 'I doubt if I was to tell a' this they would hardly believe me, mistress ; for there are sae many judges amang them, and they think sae muckle of themsells, and sae little of other folk, that unless ye were to send down the bit picture, I am no thinking they will believe a word that I can tell them.'

'No believe what an honest woman says, let abee to say twa o' them ?' exclaimed Meg. 'O the unbelieving generation ! Weel, Nelly, since my back is up, ye sall tak down the picture, or sketching, or whatever it is — though I thought sketchers were aye made of airn — and shame wi' it the conceited crew that they are. But see and bring 't back wi' ye again, Nelly, for it's a thing of value ; and trustna it out o' your hand, *that* I charge you, for I lippen no muckle to their honesty. And, Nelly, ye may tell them he has an illustrated poem — *illustrated* — mind the word, Nelly — that is to be stuck as fou o' the like o' that as ever turkey was larded wi' dabs o' bacon.'

Thus furnished with her credentials, and acting the part of a herald betwixt two hostile countries, honest Nelly switched her little fish-cart downwards to St. Ronan's Well.

In watering-places, as in other congregated assemblies of the human species, various kinds of government have been dictated,

by chance, caprice, or convenience ; but in almost all of them some sort of direction has been adopted, to prevent the consequences of anarchy. Sometimes the sole power has been vested in a master of ceremonies ; but this, like other despotisms, has been of late unfashionable, and the powers of this great officer have been much limited even at Bath, where Nash once ruled with undisputed supremacy. Committees of management, chosen from among the most steady guests, have been in general resorted to, as a more liberal mode of sway, and to such was confided the administration of the infant republic of St. Ronan's Well. This little senate, it must be observed, had the more difficult task in discharging their high duties, that, like those of other republics, their subjects were divided into two jarring and contending factions, who every day eat, drank, danced, and made merry together, hating each other all the while with all the animosity of political party, endeavouring by every art to secure the adherence of each guest who arrived, and ridiculing the absurdities and follies of each other, with all the wit and bitterness of which they were masters.

At the head of one of these parties was no less a personage than Lady Penelope Penfeather, to whom the establishment owed its fame, nay, its existence ; and whose influence could only have been balanced by that of the lord of the manor, Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's, or, as he was called usually by the company who affected what Meg called 'knapping English,' The Squire, who was leader of the opposite faction.

The rank and fortune of the lady, her pretensions to beauty as well as talent, though the former was something faded, and the consequence which she arrogated to herself as a woman of fashion, drew round her painters, and poets, and philosophers, and men of science, and lecturers, and foreign adventurers, *et hoc genus omne*.

On the contrary, the squire's influence, as a man of family and property in the immediate neighbourhood, who actually kept greyhounds and pointers, and at least talked of hunters and of racers, ascertained him the support of the whole class of bucks, half and whole bred, from the three next counties ; and if more inducements were wanting, he could grant his favourites the privilege of shooting over his moors, which is enough to turn the head of a young Scottishman at any time. Mr. Mowbray was of late especially supported in his pre-eminence by a close alliance with Sir Bingo Binks, a sapient English baronet, who, ashamed, as many thought, to return to his own country,

had set him down at the Well of St. Ronan's, to enjoy the blessing which the Caledonian Hymen had so kindly forced on him in the person of Miss Rachel Bonnyrigg. As this gentleman actually drove a regular-built mail-coach, not in any respect differing from that of his Majesty, only that it was more frequently overturned, his influence with a certain set was irresistible, and the squire of St. Ronan's, having the better sense of the two, contrived to reap the full benefit of the consequence attached to his friendship.

These two contending parties were so equally balanced, that the predominance of the influence of either was often determined by the course of the sun. Thus, in the morning and forenoon, when Lady Penelope led forth her herd to lawn and shady bower, whether to visit some ruined monument of ancient times or eat their picnic luncheon, to spoil good paper with bad drawings, and good verses with repetition—in a word,

To rave, recite, and madden round the land,

her ladyship's empire over the loungers seemed uncontrolled and absolute, and all things were engaged in the *tourbillon* of which she formed the pivot and centre. Even the hunters, and shooters, and hard drinkers were sometimes fain reluctantly to follow in her train, sulking, and quizzing, and flouting at her solemn festivals, besides encouraging the younger nymphs to giggle when they should have looked sentimental. But after dinner the scene was changed, and her ladyship's sweetest smiles and softest invitations were often insufficient to draw the neutral part of the company to the tea-room; so that her society was reduced to those whose constitution or finances rendered early retirement from the dining-parlour a matter of convenience, together with the more devoted and zealous of her own immediate dependants and adherents. Even the faith of the latter was apt to be debauched. Her ladyship's poet-laureate, in whose behalf she was teasing each newcomer for subscriptions, got sufficiently independent to sing in her ladyship's presence, at supper, a song of rather equivocal meaning; and her chief painter, who was employed upon an illustrated copy of the *Loves of the Plants*, was, at another time, seduced into such a state of pot-valour that, upon her ladyship's administering her usual dose of criticism upon his works, he not only bluntly disputed her judgment, but talked something of his right to be treated like a gentleman.

These feuds were taken up by the Managing Committee, who

interceded for the penitent offenders on the following morning, and obtained their re-establishment in Lady Penelope's good graces, upon moderate terms. Many other acts of moderating authority they performed, much to the assuaging of faction and the quiet of the Wellers; and so essential was their government to the prosperity of the place, that, without them, St. Ronan's spring would probably have been speedily deserted. We must, therefore, give a brief sketch of that potential Committee, which both factions, acting as if on a self-denying ordinance, had combined to invest with the reins of government.

Each of its members appeared to be selected, as Fortunio, in the fairy tale, chose his followers, for his peculiar gifts. First on the list stood the Man of Medicine, Dr. Quentin Quackleben, who claimed right to regulate medical matters at the spring upon the principle which, of old, assigned the property of a newly-discovered country to the bucanier who committed the earliest piracy on its shores. The acknowledgment of the doctor's merit, as having been first to proclaim and vindicate the merits of these healing fountains, had occasioned his being universally installed first physician and man of science, which last qualification he could apply to all purposes, from the boiling of an egg to the giving a lecture. He was, indeed, qualified, like many of his profession, to spread both the bane and antidote before a dyspeptic patient, being as knowing a gastronome as Dr. Redgill himself, or any other worthy physician who has written for the benefit of the *cuisine*, from Dr. Moncrieff of Tippermalluch to the late Dr. Hunter of York and the present Dr. Kitchiner of London. But pluralities are always invidious, and therefore the doctor prudently relinquished the office of caterer and head-carver to the Man of Taste, who occupied regularly, and *ex officio*, the head of the table, reserving to himself the occasional privilege of criticising, and a principal share in consuming, the good things which the common entertainment afforded. We have only to sum up this brief account of the learned doctor by informing the reader that he was a tall, lean, beetle-browed man, with an ill-made black scratch-wig, that stared out on either side from his lantern jaws. He resided nine months out of the twelve at St. Ronan's, and was supposed to make an indifferent good thing of it, especially as he played whist to admiration.

First in place, though perhaps second to the doctor in real authority, was Mr. Winterblossom — a civil sort of person, who was nicely precise in his address, wore his hair cued and dressed

with powder, had knee-buckles set with Bristol stones, and a seal-ring as large as Sir John Falstaff's. In his heyday he had a small estate, which he had spent like a gentleman, by mixing with the gay world. He was, in short, one of those respectable links that connect the coxcombs of the present day with those of the last age, and could compare, in his own experience, the follies of both. In latter days, he had sense enough to extricate himself from his course of dissipation, though with impaired health and impoverished fortune.

Mr. Winterblossom now lived upon a moderate annuity, and had discovered a way of reconciling his economy with much company and made dishes, by acting as perpetual president of the *table-d'hôte* at the Well. Here he used to amuse the society by telling stories about Garrick, Foote, Bonnel Thornton, and Lord Kelly, and delivering his opinions in matters of taste and vertu. An excellent carver, he knew how to help each guest to what was precisely his due; and never failed to reserve a proper slice as the reward of his own labours. To conclude, he was possessed of some taste in the fine arts, at least in painting and music, although it was rather of the technical kind than that which warms the heart and elevates the feelings. There was, indeed, about Winterblossom nothing that was either warm or elevated. He was shrewd, selfish, and sensual; the last two of which qualities he screened from observation under a specious varnish of exterior complaisance. Therefore, in his professed and apparent anxiety to do the honours of the table to the most punctilious point of good breeding, he never permitted the attendants upon the public taste to supply the wants of others until all his own private comforts had been fully arranged and provided for.

Mr. Winterblossom was also distinguished for possessing a few curious engravings and other specimens of art, with the exhibition of which he occasionally beguiled a wet morning at the public room. They were collected '*vis et modis*,' said the Man of Law, another distinguished member of the Committee, with a knowing cock of his eye to his next neighbour.

Of this person little need be said. He was a large-boned, loud-voiced, red-faced man, named Meiklewham—a country writer, or attorney, who managed the matters of the squire much to the profit of one or other, if not of both. His nose projected from the front of his broad vulgar face like the stile of an old sun-dial, twisted all of one side. He was as great a bully in his profession as if it had been military instead of

civil ; conducted the whole technicalities concerning the cutting up the Saint's Well haugh, so much lamented by Dame Dods, into building-stances ; and was on excellent terms with Doctor Quackleben, who always recommended him to make the wills of his patients.

After the Man of Law comes Captain Mungo [Hector] Mac-Turk, a Highland lieutenant on half-pay, and that of ancient standing ; one who preferred toddy of the strongest to wine, and in that fashion and cold drams finished about a bottle of whisky *per diem*, whenever he could come by it. He was called the Man of Peace, on the same principle which assigns to constables, Bow Street runners, and such-like, who carry bludgeons to break folks' heads, and are perpetually and officially employed in scenes of riot, the title of peace-officers — that is, because by his valour he compelled others to act with discretion. The captain was the general referee in all those abortive quarrels which, at a place of this kind, are so apt to occur at night, and to be quietly settled in the morning ; and occasionally adopted a quarrel himself, by way of taking down any guest who was unusually pugnacious. This occupation procured Captain Mac-Turk a good deal of respect at the Well ; for he was precisely that sort of person who is ready to fight with any one ; whom no one can find an apology for declining to fight with ; in fighting with whom considerable danger was incurred, for he was ever and anon showing that he could snuff a candle with a pistol ball, and lastly, through fighting with whom no *éclat* or credit could redound to the antagonist. He always wore a blue coat and red collar, had a supercilious taciturnity of manner, ate sliced leeks with his cheese, and resembled in complexion a Dutch red herring.

Still remains to be mentioned the Man of Religion — the gentle Mr. Simon Chatterly, who had strayed to St. Ronan's Well from the banks of Cam or Isis, and who piqued himself, first on his Greek, and secondly on his politeness to the ladies. During all the week-days, as Dame Dods has already hinted, this reverend gentleman was the partner at the whist-table, or in the ball-room, to what maid or matron soever lacked a partner at either ; and on the Sundays he read prayers in the public room to all who chose to attend. He was also a deviser of charades and an unriddler of riddles ; he played a little on the flute ; and was Mr. Winterblossom's principal assistant in contriving those ingenious and romantic paths by which, as by the zigzags which connect military parallels, you were enabled to

ascend to the top of the hill behind the hotel, which commands so beautiful a prospect, at exactly that precise angle of ascent which entitles a gentleman to offer his arm, and a lady to accept it, with perfect propriety.

There was yet another member of this Select Committee, Mr. Michael Meredith, who might be termed the Man of Mirth, or, if you please, the Jack Pudding, to the company, whose business it was to crack the best joke and sing the best song—he could. Unluckily, however, this functionary was for the present obliged to absent himself from St. Ronan's; for, not recollecting that he did not actually wear the privileged motley of his profession, he had passed some jest upon Captain Mac-Turk, which cut so much to the quick that Mr. Meredith was fain to go to goat-whey quarters, at some ten miles' distance, and remain there in a sort of concealment until the affair should be made up through the mediation of his brethren of the Committee.

Such were the honest gentlemen who managed the affairs of this rising settlement with as much impartiality as could be expected. They were not indeed without their own secret predilections; for the lawyer and the soldier privately inclined to the party of the squire, while the parson, Mr. Meredith, and Mr. Winterblossom were more devoted to the interests of Lady Penelope; so that Doctor Quackleben alone, who probably recollected that the gentlemen were as liable to stomach complaints as the ladies to nervous disorders, seemed the only person who preserved in word and deed the most rigid neutrality. Nevertheless, the interests of the establishment being very much at the heart of this honourable council, and each feeling his own profit, pleasure, or comfort in some degree involved, they suffered not their private affections to interfere with their public duties, but acted, every one in his own sphere, for the public benefit of the whole community.

CHAPTER IV

The Invitation

Thus painters write their names at Co.

PRIOR.

THE clamour which attends the removal of dinner from a public room had subsided : the clatter of plates, and knives and forks ; the bustling tread of awkward boobies of country servants, kicking each other's shins, and wrangling, as they endeavour to rush out of the door three abreast ; the clash of glasses and tumblers, borne to earth in the tumult ; the shrieks of the landlady ; the curses, not loud, but deep, of the landlord — had all passed away ; and those of the company who had servants had been accommodated by their respective Ganymedes with such remnants of their respective bottles of wine, spirits, etc., as the said Ganymedes had not previously consumed, while the rest, broken into such observance by Mr. Winterblossom, waited patiently until the worthy president's own special and multifarious commissions had been executed by a tidy young woman and a lumpish lad, the regular attendants belonging to the house, but whom he permitted to wait on no one till, as the hymn says,

All his wants were well supplied.

‘ And, Dinah, my bottle of pale sherry, Dinah ; place it on this side, there's a good girl ; and, Toby, get my jug with the hot water, and let it be boiling ; and don't spill it on Lady Penelope, if you can help it, Toby.’

‘ No ; for her ladyship has been in hot water to-day already,’ said the squire ; a sarcasm to which Lady Penelope only replied with a look of contempt.

‘ And, Dinah, bring the sugar — the soft East India sugar, Dinah — and a lemon, Dinah, one of those which came fresh to-day. Go fetch it from the bar, Toby ; and don't tumble

downstairs, if you can help it. And, Dinah — stay, Dinah — the nutmeg, Dinah, and the ginger, my good girl. And, Dinah, put the cushion up behind my back, and the footstool to my foot, for my toe is something the worse of my walk with your ladyship this morning to the top of Belvidere.'

'Her ladyship may call it what she pleases in common parlance,' said the writer; 'but it must stand Munt Grunzie in the stamped paper, being so nominated in the ancient writs and evidents thereof.'

'And, Dinah,' continued the president, 'lift up my handkerchief — and — a bit of biscuit, Dinah — and — and I do not think I want anything else. Look to the company, my good girl. I have the honour to drink the company's very good health. Will your ladyship honour me by accepting a glass of negus? I learned to make negus from old Dartineuf's son. He always used East India sugar, and added a tamarind; it improves the flavour infinitely. Dinah, see your father sends for some tamarinds. Dartineuf knew a good thing almost as well as his father. I met him at Bath in the year — let me see — Garrick was just taking leave, and that was in,' etc. etc. etc. 'And what is this now, Dinah?' he said, as she put into his hand a roll of paper.

'Something that Nelly Trotter (Trotting Nelly, as the company called her) brought from a sketching gentleman that lives at the woman's (thus bluntly did the upstart minx describe the reverend Mrs. Margaret Dods) at the Cleikum of Aultoun yonder,' — a name, by the way, which the inn had acquired from the use which the saint upon the sign-post was making of his pastoral crook.

'Indeed, Dinah!' said Mr. Winterblossom, gravely taking out his spectacles and wiping them before he opened the roll of paper; 'some boy's daubing, I suppose, whose pa and ma wish to get him into the Trustees' School, and so are beating about for a little interest. But I am drained dry: I put three lads in last season; and if it had not been my particular interest with the secretary, who asks my opinion now and then, I could not have managed it. But "Giff-gaff" say I. Eh! What, in the devil's name, is this? Here is both force and keeping. Who can this be, my lady? Do but see the sky-line — why, this is really a little bit — an exquisite little bit. Who the devil can it be? and how can he have stumbled upon the dog-hole in the Old Town, and the snarling b—— I beg your ladyship ten thousand pardons — that kennels there?'

'I daresay, my lady,' said a little miss of fourteen, her eyes growing rounder and rounder, and her cheeks redder and redder, as she found herself speaking, and so many folks listening — 'O la! I daresay it is the same gentleman we met one day in the Low Wood Walk, that looked like a gentleman, and yet was none of the company, and that you said was a handsome man.'

'I did not say "handsome," Maria,' replied her ladyship: 'ladies never say men are handsome. I only said he looked genteel and interesting.'

'And that, my lady,' said the young parson, bowing and smiling, 'is, I will be judged by the company, the more flattering compliment of the two. We shall be jealous of this Unknown presently.'

'Nay, but,' continued the sweetly communicative Maria, with some real and some assumed simplicity, 'your ladyship forgets — for you said presently after, you were sure he was no gentleman, for he did not run after you with your glove which you had dropped; and so I went back myself to find your ladyship's glove, and he never offered to help me, and I saw him closer than your ladyship did, and I am sure he is handsome, though he is not very civil.'

'You speak a little too much and too loud, miss,' said Lady Penelope, a natural blush reinforcing the *nuance* of rouge by which it was usually superseded.

'What say you to that, Squire Mowbray?' said the elegant Sir Bingo Binks.

'A fair challenge to the field, Sir Bingo,' answered the squire; 'when a lady throws down the gauntlet, a gentleman may throw the handkerchief.'

'I have always the benefit of *your* best construction, Mr. Mowbray,' said the lady, with dignity. 'I suppose Miss Maria has contrived this pretty story for your amusement. I can hardly answer to Mr. Digges for bringing her into company where she receives encouragement to behave so.'

'Nay — nay, my lady,' said the president, 'you must let the jest pass by; and since this is really such an admirable sketch, you must honour us with your opinion, whether the company can consistently with propriety make any advances to this man.'

'In my opinion,' said her ladyship, the angry spot still glowing on her brow, 'there are enough of *men* among us already — I wish I could say gentlemen. As matters stand, I see little business *ladies* can have at St. Ronan's.'

This was an intimation which always brought the squire

back to good-breeding, which he could make use of when he pleased. He deprecated her ladyship's displeasure, until she told him, in returning good-humour, that she really would not trust him unless he brought his sister to be security for his future politeness.

'Clara, my lady,' said Mowbray, 'is a little wilful; and I believe your ladyship must take the task of unharbouring her into your own hands. What say you to a gipsy party up to my old shop? It is a bachelor's house, you must not expect things in much order; but Clara would be honoured ——'

The Lady Penelope eagerly accepted the proposal of something like a party, and, quite reconciled with Mowbray, began to inquire whether she might bring the stranger artist with her; 'that is,' said her ladyship, looking to Dinah, 'if he be a gentleman.'

Here Dinah interposed her assurance, 'that the gentleman at Meg Dods's was quite and clean a gentleman, and an illustrated poet besides.'

'An illustrated poet, Dinah!' said Lady Penelope; 'you must mean an illustrious poet.'

'I dare to say your ladyship is right,' said Dinah, dropping a courtesy.

A joyous flutter of impatient anxiety was instantly excited through all the blue-stockings of the company, nor were the news totally indifferent to the rest of the community. The former belonged to that class who, like the young Ascanius, are ever beating about in quest of a tawny lion, though they are much more successful in now and then starting a great bore;¹ and the others, having left all their own ordinary affairs and subjects of interest at home, were glad to make a matter of importance of the most trivial occurrence. A mighty poet, said the former class; who could it possibly be? All names were recited, all Britain scrutinised, from Highland hills to the Lakes of Cumberland, from Sydenham Common to St. James's Place; even the banks of the Bosphorus were explored for some name which might rank under this distinguished epithet. And then, besides his illustrious poesy, to sketch so inimitably! Who *could* it be? And all the gapers, who had nothing of their own to suggest, answered with the antistrophe, 'Who could it be?'

¹ The one or the other was equally *in votis* to Ascanius, —

Optat aprum aut fulvum descendere monte leonem.

Modern Trojans make a great distinction betwixt these two objects of chase.

The Claret Club, which comprised the choicest and firmest adherents of Squire Mowbray and the baronet — men who scorned that the reversion of one bottle of wine should furnish forth the feast of to-morrow, though caring nought about either of the fine arts in question, found out an interest of their own, which centred in the same individual.

'I say, little Sir Bingo,' said the squire, 'this is the very fellow that we saw down at the Willowslack on Saturday; he was tog'd gnostically enough, and cast twelve yards of line with one hand — the fly fell like a thistledown on the water.'

'Uich!' answered the party he addressed, in the accents of a dog choking in the collar.

'We saw him pull out the salmon yonder,' said Mowbray; 'you remember — clean fish — the tide-ticks on his gills — weighed, I daresay, a matter of eighteen pounds.'

'Sixteen!' replied Sir Bingo, in the same tone of strangulation.

'None of your rigs, Bing!' said his companion, '— nearer eighteen than sixteen!'

'Nearer sixteen, by ——!'

'Will you go a dozen of blue on it to the company?' said the squire.

'No, d—me!' croaked the baronet; 'to our own set I will.'

'Then I say "done!"' quoth the squire.

And 'done!' responded the knight, and out came their red pocket-books.

'But who shall decide the bet?' said the squire. 'The genius himself, I suppose; they talk of asking him here, but I suppose he will scarce mind quizzes like them.'

'Write myself, John Mowbray,' said the baronet.

'You, baronet! — you write!' answered the squire; 'd—me, that cock won't fight — you won't.'

'I will,' growled Sir Bingo, more articulately than usual.

'Why, you can't!' said Mowbray. 'You never wrote a line in your life, save those you were whipped for at school.'

'I can write — I will write!' said Sir Bingo. 'Two to one I will.'

And there the affair rested, for the council of the company were in high consultation concerning the most proper manner of opening a communication with the mysterious stranger; and the voice of Mr. Winterblossom, whose tones, originally fine, age had reduced to falsetto, was calling upon the whole party

for 'Order — order !' So that the bucks were obliged to lounge in silence, with both arms reclined on the table, and testifying, by coughs and yawns, their indifference to the matters in question, while the rest of the company debated upon them as if they were matters of life and death.

'A visit from one of the gentlemen — Mr. Winterblossom, if he would take the trouble — in name of the company at large, would,' Lady Penelope Penfeather presumed to think, 'be a necessary preliminary to an invitation.'

Mr. Winterblossom was 'quite of her ladyship's opinion, and would gladly have been the personal representative of the company at St. Ronan's Well ; but it was uphill — her ladyship knew his tyrant, the gout, was hovering upon the frontiers ; there were other gentlemen, younger and more worthy to fly at the lady's command than an ancient Vulcan like him : there was the valiant Mars and the eloquent Mercury.'

Thus speaking, he bowed to Captain MacTurk and the Rev. Mr. Simon Chatterly, and reclined on his chair, sipping his negus with the self-satisfied smile of one who, by a pretty speech, has rid himself of a troublesome commission. At the same time, by an act probably of mental absence, he put in his pocket the drawing, which, after circulating around the table, had returned back to the chair of the president, being the point from which it had set out.

'By Cot, madam,' said Captain MacTurk, 'I should be proud to obey your leddyship's commands ; but, by Cot, I never call first on any man that never called upon me at all, unless it were to carry him a friend's message or such-like.'

'Twig the old connoisseur,' said the squire to the knight, 'He is condiddling the drawing.'

'Go it, Johnnie Mowbray — pour it into him,' whispered Sir Bingo.

'Thank ye for nothing, Sir Bingo,' said the squire, in the same tone. 'Winterblossom is one of us — *was* one of us at least — and won't stand the ironing. He has his Wogdens still, that were right things in his day, and can hit the haystack with the best of us ; but stay, they are hallooing on the parson.'

They were indeed busied on all hands to obtain Mr. Chatterly's consent to wait on the genius unknown ; but though he smiled and simpered, and was absolutely incapable of saying 'No,' he begged leave, in all humility, to decline that commission. 'The truth was,' he pleaded in his excuse, 'that having one day

walked to visit the old Castle of St. Ronan's, and returning through the Auld Town, as it was popularly called, he had stopped at the door of the Cleikum (pronounced *Anglicé* with the open diphthong), in hopes to get a glass of syrup of capillaire, or a draught of something cooling; and had in fact expressed his wishes, and was knocking pretty loudly, when a sash-window was thrown suddenly up, and ere he was aware what was about to happen he was soused with a deluge of water (as he said), while the voice of an old hag from within assured him that, if that did not cool him, there was another bidding him — an intimation which induced him to retreat in all haste from the repetition of the shower-bath.'

All laughed at the account of the chaplain's misfortune, the history of which seemed to be wrung from him reluctantly by the necessity of assigning some weighty cause for declining to execute the ladies' commands. But the squire and baronet continued their mirth far longer than decorum allowed, flinging themselves back in their chairs, with their hands thrust into their side-pockets, and their mouths expanded with unrestrained enjoyment, until the sufferer, angry, disconcerted, and endeavouring to look scornful, incurred another general burst of laughter on all hands.

When Mr. Winterblossom had succeeded in restoring some degree of order, he found the mishaps of the young divine proved as intimidating as ludicrous. Not one of the company chose to go envoy extraordinary to the dominions of Queen Meg, who might be suspected of paying little respect to the sanctity of an ambassador's person. And what was worse, when it was resolved that a civil card from Mr. Winterblossom, in the name of the company, should be sent to the stranger, instead of a personal visit, Dinah informed them that she was sure no one about the house could be bribed to carry up a letter of the kind; for, when such an event had taken place two summers since, Meg, who construed it into an attempt to seduce from her tenement the invited guest, had so handled a ploughboy who carried the letter, that he fled the countryside altogether, and never thought himself safe till he was at a village ten miles off, where it was afterwards learned he enlisted with a recruiting party, choosing rather to face the French than to return within the sphere of Meg's displeasure.

Just while they were agitating this new difficulty, a prodigious clamour was heard without, which, to the first apprehensions of the company, seemed to be Meg, in all her terrors,

come to anticipate the proposed invasion. Upon inquiry, however, it proved to be her gossip, Trotting Nelly, or Nelly Trotter, in the act of forcing her way upstairs against the united strength of the whole household of the hotel, to reclaim Luckie Dods's picture, as she called it. This made the connoisseur's treasure tremble in his pocket, who, thrusting a half-crown into Toby's hand, exhorted him to give it her, and try his influence in keeping her back. Toby, who knew Nelly's nature, put the half-crown into his own pocket, and snatched up a gill-stoup of whisky from the sideboard. Thus armed, he boldly confronted the virago, and interposing a *remora*, which was able to check poor Nelly's course in her most determined moods, not only succeeded in averting the immediate storm which approached the company in general, and Mr. Winterblossom in particular, but brought the guests the satisfactory information that Trotting Nelly had agreed, after she had slept out her nap in the barn, to convey their commands to the Unknown of Cleikum of Aultoun.

Mr. Winterblossom, therefore, having authenticated his proceedings by inserting in the minutes of the Committee the authority which he had received, wrote his card in the best style of diplomacy, and sealed it with the seal of the Spa, which bore something like a nymph, seated beside what was designed to represent an urn.

The rival factions, however, did not trust entirely to this official invitation. Lady Penelope was of opinion that they should find some way of letting the stranger — a man of talent unquestionably — understand that there were in the society to which he was invited spirits of a more select sort, who felt worthy to intrude themselves on his solitude.

Accordingly, her ladyship imposed upon the elegant Mr. Chatterly the task of expressing the desire of the company to see the unknown artist, in a neat occasional copy of verses. The poor gentleman's muse, however, proved unpropitious; for he was able to proceed no farther than two lines in half an hour, which, coupled with its variations, we insert from the blotted manuscript, as Dr. Johnson has printed the alterations in Pope's version of the *Iliad*:

1. Maids.	2. Dames.	unity joining.
The [nymphs] of St. Ronan's [in purpose combining]		
1. Swain.	2. Man.	
To the [youth] who is great both in verse and designing,		
.	.	dining.

The eloquence of a prose billet was necessarily resorted to in the absence of the heavenly muse, and the said billet was secretly entrusted to the care of Trotting Nelly. The same trusty emissary, when refreshed by her nap among the pease-straw, and about to harness her cart for her return to the sea-coast (in the course of which she was to pass the Aultoun), received another card, written, as he had threatened, by Sir Bingo Binks himself, who had given himself this trouble to secure the settlement of the bet; conjecturing that a man with a fashionable exterior, who could throw twelve yards of line at a cast with such precision, might consider the invitation of Winterblossom as that of an old twaddler, and care as little for the good graces of an affected blue-stockings and her coterie, whose conversation, in Sir Bingo's mind, relished of nothing but of weak tea and bread and butter. Thus the happy Mr. Francis Tyrrel received, considerably to his surprise, no less than three invitations at once from the Well of St. Ronan's.

CHAPTER V

Epistolary Eloquence

But how can I answer, since first I must read thee?

PRIOR.

DESIROUS of authenticating our more important facts by as many original documents as possible, we have, after much research, enabled ourselves to present the reader with the following accurate transcripts of the notes entrusted to the care of Trotting Nelly. The first ran thus :

'Mr. Winterblossom (of Silverhed) has the commands of Lady Penelope Penfeather, Sir Bingo and Lady Binks, Mr. and Miss Mowbray (of St. Ronan's), and the rest of the company at the Hotel and Tontine Inn of St. Ronan's Well, to express their hope that the gentleman lodged at the Cleikum Inn, Old Town of St. Ronan's, will favour them with his company at the Ordinary as early and as often as may suit his convenience. The COMPANY think it necessary to send this intimation, because, according to the RULES of the place, the Ordinary can only be attended by such gentlemen and ladies as lodge at St. Ronan's Well; but they are happy to make a distinction in favour of a gentleman so distinguished for success in the fine arts as Mr. ———, residing at Cleikum. If Mr. ——— should be inclined, upon becoming further acquainted with the COMPANY and RULES of the place, to remove his residence to the Well, Mr. Winterblossom, though he would not be understood to commit himself by a positive assurance to that effect, is inclined to hope that an arrangement might be made, notwithstanding the extreme crowd of the season, to accommodate Mr. ——— at the lodging-house called Lilliput Hall. It will much conduce to facilitate this negotiation, if Mr. ——— would have the goodness to send an exact note of his stature, as Captain Rannletree seems disposed to resign the folding-bed

at Lilliput Hall, on account of his finding it rather deficient in length. Mr. Winterblossom begs farther to assure Mr. ——— of the esteem in which he holds his genius, and of his high personal consideration.

‘For ———, Esquire, Cleikum Inn,
Old Town of St. Ronan’s.

‘The Public Rooms, Hotel and Tontine,
St. Ronan’s Well, etc. etc. etc.’

The above card was written (we love to be precise in matters concerning orthography) in a neat, round, clerk-like hand, which, like Mr. Winterblossom’s character, in many particulars was most accurate and commonplace, though betraying an affectation both of flourish and of facility.

The next billet was a contrast to the diplomatic gravity and accuracy of Mr. Winterblossom’s official communication, and ran thus, the young divine’s academic jests and classical flowers of eloquence being mingled with some wild flowers from the teeming fancy of Lady Penelope :

‘A choir of Dryads and Naiads, assembled at the healing spring of St. Ronan’s, have learned with surprise that a youth, gifted by Apollo, when the Deity was prodigal, with two of his most esteemed endowments, wanders at will among their domains, frequenting grove and river, without once dreaming of paying homage to its tutelary deities. He is, therefore, summoned to their presence, and prompt obedience will ensure him forgiveness ; but in case of contumacy, let him beware how he again essays either the lyre or the pallet.

‘*Postscript.* — The adorable Penelope, long enrolled among the Goddesses for her beauty and virtues, gives Nectar and Ambrosia, which mortals call tea and cake, at the Public Rooms, near the Sacred Spring, on Thursday evening at eight o’clock, when the Muses never fail to attend. The stranger’s presence is requested to participate in the delights of the evening.

‘*Second Postscript.* — A shepherd, ambitiously aiming at more accommodation than his narrow cot affords, leaves it in a day or two.

Assuredly the thing is to be hired.

As You Like It.

‘*Postscript Third.* — Our Iris, whom mortals know as Trotting

Nelly in her tartan cloak, will bring us the stranger's answer to our celestial summons.'

This letter was written in a delicate Italian hand, garnished with fine hair-strokes and dashes, which were sometimes so dexterously thrown off as to represent lyres, pallets, vases, and other appropriate decorations, suited to the tenor of the contents.

The third epistle was a complete contrast to the other two. It was written in a coarse, irregular, schoolboy half-text, which, however, seemed to have cost the writer as much pains as if it had been a specimen of the most exquisite calligraphy. And these were the contents : —

'SUN — Jack Moobray has betted with me that the samon you killed on Saturday last weyd ni to eiteen pounds, — I say nyer sixteen. So you being a spurtsman, 'tis refer'd. So hope you will come or send me't; do not doubt you will be on honour. The bet is a dozen of claret, to be drank at the hotel by our own sett, on Monday next; and we beg you will make one; and Moobray hopes you will come down. Being, sir, your most humbel servant, Bingo Binks Baronet, and of Block Hall.

'*Postscript.* — Have sent some loops of Indian gout, also some black hakkels of my groom's dressing; hope they will prove killing, as suiting river and season.'

No answer was received to any of these invitations for more than three days, which, while it secretly rather added to than diminished the curiosity of the Wellers concerning the Unknown, occasioned much railing in public against him, as ill-mannered and rude.

Meantime, Francis Tyrrel, to his great surprise, began to find, like the philosophers, that he was never less alone than when alone. In the most silent and sequestered walks, to which the present state of his mind induced him to betake himself, he was sure to find some strollers from the Well, to whom he had become the object of so much solicitous interest. Quite innocent of the knowledge that he himself possessed the attraction which occasioned his meeting them so frequently, he began to doubt whether the Lady Penelope and her maidens, Mr. Winterblossom and his grey pony, the parson and his short black coat and raven-grey pantaloons, were not either actually

polygraphic copies of the same individuals, or possessed of a celerity of motion resembling omnipresence and ubiquity; for nowhere could he go without meeting them, and that oftener than once a-day, in the course of his walks. Sometimes the presence of the sweet Lycoris was intimated by the sweet prattle in an adjacent shade; sometimes, when Tyrrel thought himself most solitary, the parson's flute was heard snoring forth 'Gramachree Molly'; and if he betook himself to the river, he was pretty sure to find his sport watched by Sir Bingo or some of his friends.

The efforts which Tyrrel made to escape from this persecution, and the impatience of it which his manner indicated, procured him, among the Wellers, the name of the Misanthrope; and, once distinguished as an object of curiosity, he was the person most attended to who could at the ordinary of the day give the most accurate account of where the Misanthrope had been, and how occupied in the course of the morning. And so far was Tyrrel's shyness from diminishing the desire of the Wellers for his society, that the latter feeling increased with the difficulty of gratification, as the angler feels the most peculiar interest when throwing his fly for the most cunning and considerate trout in the pool.

In short, such was the interest which the excited imaginations of the company took in the Misanthrope, that, notwithstanding the unamiable qualities which the word expresses, there was only one of the society who did not desire to see the specimen at their rooms, for the purpose of examining him closely and at leisure; and the ladies were particularly desirous to inquire whether he was actually a misanthrope? Whether he had been always a misanthrope? What had induced him to become a misanthrope? And whether there were no means of inducing him to cease to be a misanthrope?

One individual only, as we have said, neither desired to see nor hear more of the supposed Timon of Cleikum, and that was Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's. Through the medium of that venerable character John Pirner, professed weaver and practical black-fisher in the Aultoun of St. Ronan's, who usually attended Tyrrel, to show him the casts of the river, carry his bag, and so forth, the squire had ascertained that the judgment of Sir Bingo regarding the disputed weight of the fish was more correct than his own. This inferred an immediate loss of honour, besides the payment of a heavy bill. And the consequences might be yet more serious: nothing short of the

emancipation of Sir Bingo, who had hitherto been Mowbray's convenient shadow and adherent, but who, if triumphant, confiding in his superiority of judgment upon so important a point, might either cut him altogether, or expect that in future the squire, who had long seemed the planet of their set, should be content to roll around himself, Sir Bingo, in the capacity of a satellite.

The squire, therefore, devoutly hoped that Tyrrel's restive disposition might continue to prevent the decision of the bet, while, at the same time, he nourished a very reasonable degree of dislike to that stranger, who had been the indirect occasion of the unpleasant predicament in which he found himself, by not catching a salmon weighing a pound heavier. He, therefore, openly censured the meanness of those who proposed taking further notice of Tyrrel, and referred to the unanswered letters as a piece of impertinence which announced him to be no gentleman.

But though appearances were against him, and though he was in truth naturally inclined to solitude, and averse to the affectation and bustle of such a society, that part of Tyrrel's behaviour which indicated ill-breeding was easily accounted for by his never having received the letters which required an answer. Trotting Nelly, whether unwilling to face her gossip, Meg Dods, without bringing back the drawing, or whether oblivious through the influence of the double dram with which she had been indulged at the Well, jumbled off with her cart to her beloved village of Scate Raw, from which she transmitted the letters by the first barelegged gillie who travelled towards Aultoun of St. Ronan's; so that at last, but after a long delay, they reached the Cleikum Inn and the hands of Mr. Tyrrel.

The arrival of these documents explained some part of the oddity of behaviour which had surprised him in his neighbours of the Well; and as he saw they had got somehow an idea of his being a lion extraordinary, and was sensible that such is a character equally ridiculous and difficult to support, he hastened to write to Mr. Winterblossom a card in the style of ordinary mortals. In this he stated the delay occasioned by miscarriage of the letter, and his regret on that account; expressed his intention of dining with the company at the Well on the succeeding day, while he regretted that other circumstances, as well as the state of his health and spirits, would permit him this honour very infrequently during his stay in the country; and begged no trouble might be taken about his

accommodation at the Well, as he was perfectly satisfied with his present residence. A separate note to Sir Bingo said he was happy he could verify the weight of the fish, which he had noted in his diary ('D—n the fellow, does he keep a dairy?' said the baronet); and though the result could only be particularly agreeable to one party, he should wish both winner and loser mirth with their wine; he was sorry he was unable to promise himself the pleasure of participating in either. Inclosed was a signed note of the weight of the fish. Armed with this, Sir Bingo claimed his wine, triumphed in his judgment, swore louder and more articulately than ever he was known to utter any previous sounds, that this Tyrrel was a devilish honest fellow, and he trusted to be better acquainted with him; while the crestfallen squire, privately cursing the stranger by all his gods, had no mode of silencing his companion but by allowing his loss, and fixing a day for discussing the bet.

In the public rooms the company examined even microscopically the response of the stranger to Mr. Winterblossom, straining their ingenuity to discover, in the most ordinary expressions, a deeper and esoteric meaning, expressive of something mysterious, and not meant to meet the eye. Mr. Meiklewham, the writer, dwelt on the word 'circumstances,' which he read with peculiar emphasis.

'Ah, poor lad!' he concluded, 'I doubt he sits cheaper at Meg Dorts's chimney-corner than he could do with the present company.'

Doctor Quackleben, in the manner of a clergyman selecting a word from his text as that which is to be particularly insisted upon, repeated in an undertone the words — 'State of health! — umph — state of health! Nothing acute — no one has been sent for — must be chronic — tending to gout, perhaps? Or his shyness to society — light wild eye — irregular step — starting when met suddenly by a stranger, and turning abruptly and angrily away. Pray, Mr. Winterblossom, let me have an order to look over the file of newspapers; it's very troublesome that restriction about consulting them.'

'You know it is a necessary one, doctor,' said the president; 'because so few of the good company read anything else, that the old newspapers would have been worn to pieces long since.'

'Well — well, let me have the order,' said the doctor. 'I remember something of a gentleman run away from his friends;

I must look at the description. I believe I have a strait-jacket somewhere about the dispensary.'

While this suggestion appalled the male part of the company, who did not much relish the approaching dinner in company with a gentleman whose situation seemed so precarious, some of the younger misses whispered to each other,— 'Ah, poor fellow! and if it be as the doctor supposes, my lady, who knows what the cause of his illness may have been? His *spirits* he complains of — ah, poor man!'

And thus, by the ingenious commentaries of the company at the Well on as plain a note as ever covered the eighth part of a sheet of foolscap, the writer was deprived of his property, his reason, and his heart, 'all or either, or one or other of them,' as is briefly and distinctly expressed in the law phrase.

In short, so much was said *pro* and *con*, so many ideas started and theories maintained, concerning the disposition and character of the Misanthrope, that, when the company assembled at the usual time, before proceeding to dinner, they doubted, as it seemed, whether the expected addition to their society was to enter the room on his hands or his feet; and when 'Mr. Tyrrel' was announced by Toby at the top of his voice, the gentleman who entered the room had so very little to distinguish him from others that there was a momentary disappointment. The ladies, in particular, began to doubt whether the compound of talent, misanthropy, madness, and mental sensibility which they had pictured to themselves actually was the same with the genteel, and even fashionable-looking, man whom they saw before them, who, though in a morning-dress, which the distance of his residence and the freedom of the place made excusable, had, even in the minute points of his exterior, none of the negligence or wildness which might be supposed to attach to the vestments of a misanthropic recluse, whether sane or insane. As he paid his compliments round the circle, the scales seemed to fall from the eyes of those he spoke to; and they saw with surprise that the exaggerations had existed entirely in their own preconceptions, and that whatever the fortunes or rank in life of Mr. Tyrrel might be, his manners, without being showy, were gentlemanlike and pleasing. He returned his thanks to Mr. Winterblossom in a manner which made that gentleman recall his best breeding to answer the stranger's address in kind. He then escaped from the awkwardness of remaining the sole object of attention, by gliding gradually among the company —

not like an owl, which seeks to hide itself in a thicket, or an awkward and retired man, shrinking from the society into which he is compelled, but with the air of one who could maintain with ease his part in a higher circle. His address to Lady Penelope was adapted to the romantic tone of Mr. Chatterly's epistle, to which it was necessary to allude. He was afraid, he said, he must complain to Juno of the neglect of Iris, for her irregularity in delivery of a certain ethereal command, which he had not dared to answer otherwise than by mute obedience — unless, indeed, as the import of the letter seemed to infer, the invitation was designed for some more gifted individual than he to whom chance had assigned it.

Lady Penelope by her lips, and many of the young ladies with their eyes, assured him there was no mistake in the matter: that he was really the gifted person whom the nymphs had summoned to their presence, and that they were well acquainted with his talents as a poet and a painter. Tyrrel disclaimed, with earnestness and gravity, the charge of poetry, and professed that, far from attempting the art itself, he 'read with reluctance all but the productions of the very first-rate poets, and some of these — he was almost afraid to say — he should have liked better in humble prose.'

'You have now only to disown your skill as an artist,' said Lady Penelope, 'and we must consider Mr. Tyrrel as the falsest and most deceitful of his sex, who has a mind to deprive us of the opportunity of benefiting by the productions of his unparalleled endowments. I assure you I shall put my young friends on their guard. Such dissimulation cannot be without its object.'

'And I,' said Mr. Winterblossom, 'can produce a piece of real evidence against the culprit.'

So saying, he unrolled the sketch which he had filched from Trotting Nelly, and which he had pared and pasted (arts in which he was eminent) so as to take out its creases, repair its breaches, and vamp it as well as my old friend Mrs. Weir could have repaired the damages of time on a folio Shakspeare.

'The *vara corpus delicti*,' said the writer, grinning and rubbing his hands.

'If you are so good as to call such scratches drawings,' said Tyrrel, 'I must stand so far confessed. I used to do them for my own amusement; but since my landlady, Mrs. Dods, has of late discovered that I gain my livelihood by them, why should I disown it?'

This avowal, made without the least appearance either of shame or *retenue*, seemed to have a striking effect on the whole society. The president's trembling hand stole the sketch back to the portfolio, afraid, doubtless, it might be claimed in form, or else compensation expected by the artist. Lady Penelope was disconcerted, like an awkward horse when it changes the leading foot in galloping. She had to recede from the respectful and easy footing on which he had contrived to place himself to one which might express patronage on her own part and dependence on Tyrrel's; and this could not be done in a moment.

The Man of Law murmured, 'Circumstances — circumstances! I thought so.'

Sir Bingo whispered to his friend the squire, 'Run out — blown up — off the course — pity — d—d pretty fellow he has been!'

'A raff from the beginning!' whispered Mowbray. 'I never thought him anything else.'

'I'll hold ye a poney of that, my dear, and I'll ask him.'

'Done, for a poney, provided you ask him in ten minutes,' said the squire; 'but you dare not, Bingie: he has a d—d cross game look, with all that civil chaff of his.'

'Done,' said Sir Bingo, but in a less confident tone than before, and with a determination to proceed with some caution in the matter. 'I have got a rouleau above, and Winter-blossom shall hold stakes.'

'I have no rouleau,' said the squire; 'but I'll fly a cheque on Meiklewham.'

'See it be better than your last,' said Sir Bingo, 'for I won't be skylarked again. Jack, my boy, you are had.'

'Not till the bet's won; and I shall see yon walking dandy break your head, Bingie, before that,' answered Mowbray. 'Best speak to the captain beforehand; it is a hellish scrape you are running into. I'll let you off yet, Bingie, for a guinea forfeit. See, I am just going to start the tattler.'

'Start, and be d—d!' said Sir Bingo. 'You are gotten, I assure you o' that, Jack.' And with a bow and a shuffle he went up and introduced himself to the stranger as Sir Bingo Binks.

'Had — honour — write — sir,' were the only sounds which his throat, or rather his cravat, seemed to send forth.

'Confound the booby!' thought Mowbray; 'he will get out of leading-strings if he goes on at this rate; and doubly con-

founded be this cursed tramper, who, the Lord knows why, has come hither from the Lord knows where to drive the pigs through my game.'

In the meantime, while his friend stood with his stop-watch in his hand, with a visage lengthened under the influence of these reflections, Sir Bingo, with an instinctive tact, which self-preservation seemed to dictate to a brain neither the most delicate nor subtle in the world, premised his inquiry by some general remark on fishing and field-sports. With all these, he found Tyrrel more than passably acquainted. Of fishing and shooting, particularly, he spoke with something like enthusiasm; so that Sir Bingo began to hold him in considerable respect, and to assure himself that he could not be, or at least could not originally have been, bred the itinerant artist which he now gave himself out, and this, with the fast lapse of the time, induced him thus to address Tyrrel — 'I say, Mr. Tyrrel — why, you have been one of us — I say —'

'If you mean a sportsman, Sir Bingo — I have been, and am a pretty keen one still,' replied Tyrrel.

'Why, then, you did not always do them sort of things?'

'What sort of things do you mean, Sir Bingo?' said Tyrrel. 'I have not the pleasure of understanding you.'

'Why, I mean them sketches,' said Sir Bingo. 'I'll give you a handsome order for them if you will tell me. I will, on my honour.'

'Does it concern you particularly, Sir Bingo, to know anything of my affairs?' said Tyrrel.

'No — certainly — not immediately,' answered Sir Bingo, with some hesitation, for he liked not the dry tone in which Tyrrel's answers were returned half so well as a bumper of dry sherry; 'only I said you were a d—d gnostic fellow, and I laid a bet you have not been always professional — that's all.'

Mr. Tyrrel replied, 'A bet with Mr. Mowbray, I suppose?'

'Yes, with Jack,' replied the baronet; 'you have hit it. I hope I have done him?'

Tyrrel bent his brows, and looked first at Mr. Mowbray, then at the baronet, and, after a moment's thought, addressed the latter. 'Sir Bingo Binks, you are a gentleman of elegant inquiry and acute judgment. You are perfectly right: I was *not* bred to the profession of an artist, nor did I practise it formerly, whatever I may do now; and so that question is answered.'

'And Jack is diddled,' said the baronet, smiting his thigh in

triumph, and turning towards the squire and the stake-holder with a smile of exultation.

'Stop a single moment, Sir Bingo,' said Tyrrel; 'take one word with you. I have a great respect for bets; it is part of an Englishman's charter to bet on what he thinks fit, and to prosecute his inquiries over hedge and ditch, as if he were steeple-hunting. But as I have satisfied you on the subject of two bets, that is sufficient compliance with the custom of the country; and therefore I request, Sir Bingo, you will not make me or my affairs the subject of any more wagers.'

'I'll be d—d if I do,' was the internal resolution of Sir Bingo. Aloud he muttered some apologies, and was heartily glad that the dinner-bell, sounding at the moment, afforded him an apology for shuffling off in a different direction.

CHAPTER VI

Table-Talk

And, sir, if these accounts be true,
The Dutch have mighty things in view ;
The Austrians — I admire French beans,
Dear ma'am, above all other greens.

And all as lively and as brisk
As — Ma'am, d'ye choose a game at whisk ?
Table-Talk.

WHEN they were about to leave the room, Lady Penelope assumed Tyrrel's arm with a sweet smile of condescension, meant to make the honoured party understand in its full extent the favour conferred. But the unreasonable artist, far from intimating the least confusion at an attention so little to be expected, seemed to consider the distinction as one which was naturally paid to the greatest stranger present ; and when he placed Lady Penelope at the head of the table, by Mr. Winterblossom, the president, and took a chair for himself betwixt her ladyship and Lady Binks, the provoking wretch appeared no more sensible of being exalted above his proper rank in society than if he had been sitting at the bottom of the table by honest Mrs. Blower from the Bowhead, who had come to the Well to carry off the dregs of the 'influenzie,' which she scorned to term a surfeit.

Now this indifference puzzled Lady Penelope's game extremely, and irritated her desire to get at the bottom of Tyrrel's mystery, if there was one, and secure him to her own party. If you were ever at a watering-place, reader, you know that, while the guests do not always pay the most polite attention to unmarked individuals, the appearance of a stray lion makes an interest as strong as it is reasonable, and the Amazonian chiefs of each coterie, like the hunters of Buenos Ayres, prepare their lasso, and manœuvre to the best advantage

they can, each hoping to noose the unsuspecting monster, and lead him captive to her own menagerie. A few words concerning Lady Penelope Penfeather will explain why she practised this sport with even more than common zeal.

She was the daughter of an earl, possessed a showy person, and features which might be called handsome in youth, though now rather too much *prononcés* to render the term proper. The nose was become sharper; the cheeks had lost the roundness of youth; and as, during fifteen years that she had reigned a beauty and a ruling toast, the right man had not spoken, or, at least, had not spoken at the right time, her ladyship, now rendered sufficiently independent by the inheritance of an old relation, spoke in praise of friendship, began to dislike the town in summer, and to 'babble of green fields.'

About the time Lady Penelope thus changed the tenor of her life, she was fortunate enough, with Dr. Quackleben's assistance, to find out the virtues of St. Ronan's spring; and having contributed her share to establish the *urbs in rure* which had risen around it, she sat herself down as leader of the fashions in the little province which she had in a great measure both discovered and colonised. She was, therefore, justly desirous to compel homage and tribute from all who should approach the territory.

In other respects, Lady Penelope pretty much resembled the numerous class she belonged to. She was at bottom a well-principled woman, but too thoughtless to let her principles control her humour, therefore not scrupulously nice in her society. She was good-natured, but capricious and whimsical, and willing enough to be kind or generous if it neither thwarted her humour nor cost her much trouble; would have chaperoned a young friend anywhere, and moved the world for subscription tickets; but never troubled herself how much her giddy charge flirted, or with whom; so that with a numerous class of misses her ladyship was the most delightful creature in the world. Then Lady Penelope had lived so much in society, knew so exactly when to speak, and how to escape from an embarrassing discussion by professing ignorance, while she looked intelligence, that she was not generally discovered to be a fool, unless when she set up for being remarkably clever. This happened more frequently of late, when, perhaps, as she could not but observe that the repairs of the toilet became more necessary, she might suppose that new lights, according to the poet, were streaming on her mind through the chinks that Time was making. Many

of her friends, however, thought that Lady Penelope would have better consulted her genius by remaining in mediocrity, as a fashionable and well-bred woman, than by parading her new-founded pretensions to taste and patronage; but such was not her own opinion, and, doubtless, her ladyship was the best judge.

On the other side of Tyrrel sat Lady Binks, lately the beautiful Miss Bonnyrigg, who, during the last season, had made the company at the Well alternately admire, smile, and stare, by dancing the highest Highland fling, riding the wildest pony, laughing the loudest laugh at the broadest joke, and wearing the briefest petticoat of any nymph of St. Ronan's. Few knew that this wild, hoydenish, half-mad humour was only superinduced over her real character for the purpose of—getting well married. She had fixed her eyes on Sir Bingo, and was aware of his maxim, that to catch him 'a girl must be,' in his own phrase, 'bang up to everything'; and that he would choose a wife for the neck-or-nothing qualities which recommend a good hunter. She made out her catch-match, and she was miserable. Her wild good-humour was entirely an assumed part of her character, which was passionate, ambitious, and thoughtful. Delicacy she had none; she knew Sir Bingo was a brute and a fool, even while she was hunting him down; but she had so far mistaken her own feelings, as not to have expected that, when she became bone of his bone, she should feel so much shame and anger when she saw his folly expose him to be laughed at and plundered, or so disgusted when his brutality became intimately connected with herself. It is true, he was on the whole rather an innocent monster; and between biting and bridling, coaxing and humouring, might have been made to pad on well enough. But an unhappy boggling which had taken place previous to the declaration of their private marriage had so exasperated her spirits against her helpmate that modes of conciliation were the last she was likely to adopt. Not only had the assistance of the Scottish Themis, so propitiously indulgent to the foibles of the fair, been resorted to on the occasion, but even Mars seemed ready to enter upon the tapis, if Hymen had not intervened. There was, *de par le monde*, a certain brother of the lady, an officer, and, as it happened, on leave of absence, who alighted from a hack-chaise at the Fox Hotel, at eleven o'clock at night, holding in his hand a slip of well-dried oak, accompanied by another gentleman, who, like himself, wore a military travelling-cap and a black stock; out of

the said chaise, as was reported by the trusty Toby, were handed a small *reise-sac*, an Andrew Ferrara, and a neat mahogany box, eighteen inches long, three deep, and some six broad. Next morning a solemn palaver (as the natives of Madagascar call their national convention) was held at an unusual hour, at which Captain MacTurk and Mr. Mowbray assisted; and the upshot was, that at breakfast the company were made happy by the information that Sir Bingo had been for some weeks the happy bridegroom of their general favourite, which union, concealed for family reasons, he was now at liberty to acknowledge, and to fly with the wings of love to bring his sorrowing turtle from the shades to which she had retired till the obstacles to their mutual happiness could be removed. Now, though all this sounded very smoothly, that gall-less turtle, Lady Binks, could never think of the tenor of the proceedings without the deepest feelings of resentment and contempt for the principal actor, Sir Bingo.

Besides all these unpleasant circumstances, Sir Bingo's family had refused to countenance her wish that he should bring her to his own seat; and hence a new shock to her pride, and new matter of contempt against poor Sir Bingo, for being ashamed and afraid to face down the opposition of his kinsfolk, for whose displeasure, though never attending to any good advice from them, he retained a childish awe.

The manners of the young lady were no less changed than was her temper; and, from being much too careless and free, were become reserved, sullen, and haughty. A consciousness that many scrupled to hold intercourse with her in society rendered her disagreeably tenacious of her rank, and jealous of everything that appeared like neglect. She had constituted herself mistress of Sir Bingo's purse; and, unrestrained in the expenses of dress and equipage, chose, contrary to her maiden practice, to be rather rich and splendid than gay, and to command that attention by magnificence which she no longer deigned to solicit by rendering herself either agreeable or entertaining. One secret source of her misery was the necessity of showing deference to Lady Penelope Penfeather, whose understanding she despised, and whose pretensions to consequence, to patronage, and to literature she had acuteness enough to see through and to condemn; and this dislike was the more grievous, that she felt she depended a good deal on Lady Penelope's countenance for the situation she was able to maintain even among the not very select society of St. Ronan's

Well; and that, neglected by her, she must have dropped lower in the scale even there. Neither was Lady Penelope's kindness to Lady Binks extremely cordial. She partook in the ancient and ordinary dislike of single nymphs of a certain age to those who make splendid alliances under their very eye; and she more than suspected the secret disaffection of the lady. But the name sounded well; and the style in which Lady Binks lived was a credit to the place. So they satisfied their mutual dislike with saying a few sharp things to each other occasionally, but all under the mask of civility.

Such was Lady Binks; and yet, being such, her dress and her equipage and carriages were the envy of half the misses at the Well, who, while she sat disfiguring with sullenness her very lovely face, for it was as beautiful as her shape was exquisite, only thought she was proud of having carried her point, and felt herself, with her large fortune and diamond *bandeau*, no fit company for the rest of the party. They gave way, therefore, with meekness to her domineering temper, though it was not the less tyrannical that in her maiden state of hoydenhood she had been to some of them an object of slight and of censure; and Lady Binks had not forgotten the offences offered to Miss Bonnyrigg. But the fair sisterhood submitted to her retaliations, as lieutenants endure the bullying of a rude and boisterous captain of the sea, with the secret determination to pay it home to their underlings when they shall become captains themselves.

In this state of importance, yet of penance, Lady Binks occupied her place at the dinner-table, alternately disconcerted by some stupid speech of her lord and master and by some slight sarcasm from Lady Penelope, to which she longed to reply, but dared not.

She looked from time to time at her neighbour, Frank Tyrrel, but without addressing him, and accepted in silence the usual civilities which he proffered to her. She had remarked keenly his interview with Sir Bingo, and knowing by experience the manner in which her honoured lord was wont to retreat from a dispute in which he was unsuccessful, as well as his genius for getting into such perplexities, she had little doubt that he had sustained from the stranger some new indignity; whom, therefore, she regarded with a mixture of feeling, scarce knowing whether to be pleased with him for having given pain to him whom she hated, or angry with him for having affronted one in whose degradation her own was necessarily involved. There

might be other thoughts — on the whole, she regarded him with much though with mute attention. He paid her but little in return, being almost entirely occupied in replying to the questions of the engrossing Lady Penelope Penfeather.

Receiving polite though rather evasive answers to her inquiries concerning his late avocations, her ladyship could only learn that Tyrrel had been travelling in several remote parts of Europe, and even of Asia. Baffled but not repulsed, the lady continued her courtesy, by pointing out to him, as a stranger, several individuals of the company to whom she proposed introducing him, as persons from whose society he might derive either profit or amusement. In the midst of this sort of conversation, however, she suddenly stopped short.

‘Will you forgive me, Mr. Tyrrel,’ she said, ‘if I say I have been watching your thoughts for some moments, and that I have detected you? All the while that I have been talking of these good folks, and that you have been making such civil replies that they might be with great propriety and utility inserted in the *Familiar Dialogues, teaching Foreigners how to express themselves in English upon Ordinary Occasions*, your mind has been entirely fixed upon that empty chair, which hath remained there opposite betwixt our worthy president and Sir Bingo Binks.’

‘I own, madam,’ he answered, ‘I was a little surprised at seeing such a distinguished seat unoccupied, while the table is rather crowded.’

‘O, confess more, sir! Confess that to a poet a seat unoccupied — the chair of Banquo — has more charms than if it were filled even as an alderman would fill it. What if “the Dark Lady”¹ should glide in and occupy it? Would you have courage to stand the vision, Mr. Tyrrel? I assure you the thing is not impossible.’

‘What is not impossible, Lady Penelope?’ said Tyrrel, somewhat surprised.

‘Startled already! Nay, then, I despair of your enduring the awful interview.’

‘What interview? who is expected?’ said Tyrrel, unable with the utmost exertion to suppress some signs of curiosity, though he suspected the whole to be merely some mystification of her ladyship.

‘How delighted I am,’ she said, ‘that I have found out where you are vulnerable! Expected — did I say expected? — no, not expected.’

¹ See Note 4.

She glides, like night, from land to land,
She hath strange power of speech.

But come, I have you at my mercy, and I will be generous and explain. We call — that is, among ourselves, you understand — Miss Clara Mowbray, the sister of that gentleman that sits next to Miss Parker, the Dark Ladye, and that seat is left for her. For she was expected — no, not expected — I forget again! but it was thought *possible* she might honour us to-day, when our feast was so full and piquant. Her brother is our lord of the manor, and so they pay her that sort of civility to regard her as a visitor, and neither Lady Binks nor I think of objecting. She is a singular young person, Clara Mowbray; she amuses me very much, I am always rather glad to see her.'

'She is not to come hither to-day,' said Tyrrel; 'am I so to understand your ladyship?'

'Why, it is past her time — even *her* time,' said Lady Penelope; 'dinner was kept back half an hour, and our poor invalids were famishing, as you may see by the deeds they have done since. But Clara is an odd creature, and if she took it into her head to come hither at this moment, hither she would come: she is very whimsical. Many people think her handsome, but she looks so like something from another world, that she makes me always think of Mat Lewis's *Spectre Lady*.'

And she repeated with much cadence,

"There is a thing — there is a thing,
I fain would have from thee:
I fain would have that gay gold ring,
O warrior, give it me!"

'And then you remember his answer:

"This ring Lord Brooke from his daughter took,
And a solemn oath he swore,
That that ladye my bride should be
When this crusade was o'er."

You do figures as well as landscapes, I suppose, Mr. Tyrrel? You shall make a sketch for me — a slight thing; for sketches, I think, show the freedom of art better than finished pieces. I dote on the first coruscations of genius — flashing like lightning from the cloud! You shall make a sketch for my own boudoir — my dear sulky den at Air Castle — and Clara Mowbray shall sit for the Ghost Ladye.'

'That would be but a poor compliment to your ladyship's friend,' replied Tyrrel.

'Friend! We don't get quite that length, though I like Clara very well. Quite sentimental cast of face! I think I saw an antique in the Louvre very like her—I was there in 1800—quite an antique countenance—eyes something hollowed—care has dug caves for them, but they are caves of the most beautiful marble, arched with jet; a straight nose, and absolutely the Grecian mouth and chin; a profusion of long straight black hair; with the whitest skin you ever saw—as white as the whitest parchment, and not a shade of colour in her cheek—none whatever. If she would be naughty, and borrow a prudent touch of complexion, she might be called beautiful. Even as it is, many think her so, although surely, Mr. Tyrrel, three colours are necessary to the female face. However, we used to call her the Melpomene of the Spring last season, as we called Lady Binks—who was not then Lady Binks—our Euphrosyne. Did we not, my dear?'

'Did we not what, madam?' said Lady Binks, in a tone something sharper than ought to have belonged to so beautiful a countenance.

'I am sorry I have started you out of your reverie, my love,' answered Lady Penelope. 'I was only assuring Mr. Tyrrel that you were once Euphrosyne, though now so much under the banners of *Il Penseroso*.'

'I do not know that I have been either one or the other,' answered Lady Binks; 'one thing I certainly am not: I am not capable of understanding your ladyship's wit and learning.'

'Poor soul,' whispered Lady Penelope to Tyrrel; 'we know what we are, we know not what we may be. And now, Mr. Tyrrel, I have been your sibyl to guide you through this elysium of ours; I think, in reward, I deserve a little confidence in return.'

'If I had any to bestow which could be in the slightest degree interesting to your ladyship,' answered Tyrrel.

'Oh! cruel man, he will not understand me!' exclaimed the lady. 'In plain words, then, a peep into your portfolio, just to see what objects you have rescued from natural decay, and rendered immortal by the pencil. You do not know—indeed, Mr. Tyrrel, you do not know—how I dote upon your "serenely silent art"—second to poetry alone, equal—superior perhaps—to music.'

'I really have little that could possibly be worth the attention of such a judge as your ladyship,' answered Tyrrel; 'such

trifles as your ladyship has seen I sometimes leave at the foot of the tree I have been 'sketching.'

'As Orlando left his verses in the Forest of Ardennes? Oh, the thoughtless prodigality! Mr. Winterblossom, do you hear this? We must follow Mr. Tyrrel in his walks, and glean what he leaves behind him.'

Her ladyship was here disconcerted by some laughter on Sir Bingo's side of the table, which she chastised by an angry glance, and then proceeded emphatically.

'Mr. Tyrrel, this must *not* be — this is not the way of the world, my good sir, to which even genius must stoop its flight. We must consult the engraver — though perhaps you etch as well as you draw?'

'I should suppose so,' said Mr. Winterblossom, edging in a word with difficulty, 'from the freedom of Mr. Tyrrel's touch.'

'I will not deny my having spoiled a little copper now and then,' said Tyrrel, 'since I am charged with the crime by such good judges; but it has only been by way of experiment.'

'Say no more,' said the lady; 'my darling wish is accomplished! We have long desired to have the remarkable and most romantic spots of our little Arcadia here — spots consecrated to friendship, the fine arts, the loves and the graces — immortalised by the graver's art, faithful to its charge of fame; you shall labour on this task, Mr. Tyrrel. We will all assist with notes and illustrations — we will all contribute; only some of us must be permitted to remain anonymous. Fairy favours, you know, Mr. Tyrrel, must be kept secret. And you shall be allowed the pillage of the album — some 'sweet things' there of Mr. Chatterly's; and Mr. Edgeit, a gentleman of your own profession, I am sure, will lend his aid. Dr. Quackleben will contribute some scientific notices. And for subscription —'

'Financial — financial, your leddyship, I speak to order!' said the writer, interrupting Lady Penelope with a tone of impudent familiarity, which was meant, doubtless, for jocular ease.

'How am I out of order, Mr. Meiklewham?' said her ladyship, drawing herself up.

'I speak to order! No warrants for money can be extracted before intimation to the Committee of Management.'

'Pray, who mentioned money, Mr. Meiklewham?' said her ladyship. 'That wretched old pettifogger,' she added in a whisper to Tyrrel, 'thinks of nothing else but the filthy pelf.'

'Ye spake of subscription, my leddy, whilk is the same thing as money, differing only in respect of time—the subscription being a contract *de futuro*, and having a *tractus temporis in gremio*. And I have kenn'd mony honest folks in the company at the Well complain of the subscriptions as a great abuse, as obliging them either to look unlike other folk or to gie good lawful coin for ballants and picture-books, and things they caredna a pinch of snuff for.'

Several of the company at the lower end of the table assented both by nods and murmurs of approbation; and the orator was about to proceed, when Tyrrel with difficulty procured a hearing before the debate went farther, and assured the company that her ladyship's goodness had led her into an error; that he had no work in hand worthy of their patronage, and, with the deepest gratitude for Lady Penelope's goodness, had it not in his power to comply with her request. There was some tittering at her ladyship's expense, who, as the writer slyly observed, had been something *ultroneous* in her patronage. Without attempting for the moment any rally (as indeed the time which had passed since the removal of the dinner scarce permitted an opportunity), Lady Penelope gave the signal for the ladies' retreat, and left the gentlemen to the circulation of the bottle.

CHAPTER VII

The Tea-Table

While the cups,
Which cheer, but not inebriate, wait on each.

COWPER.

IT was common at the Well for the fair guests occasionally to give tea to the company — such at least as, from their rank and leading in the little society, might be esteemed fit to constitute themselves patronesses of an evening ; and the same lady generally carried the authority she had acquired into the ball-room, where two fiddles and a bass, at a guinea a-night, with a *quantum sufficit* of tallow candles (against the use of which Lady Penelope often mutinied), enabled the company — to use the appropriate phrase — ‘to close the evening on the light fantastic toe.’

On the present occasion, the lion of the hour, Mr. Francis Tyrrel, had so little answered the high-wrought expectations of Lady Penelope, that she rather regretted having ever given herself any trouble about him, and particularly that of having manœuvred herself into the patronage of the tea-table for the evening, to the great expenditure of souchong and congo. Accordingly, her ladyship had no sooner summoned her own woman and her *fille de chambre* to make tea, with her page, footman, and postilion to hand it about, in which duty they were assisted by two richly-laced and thickly-powdered footmen of Lady Binks’s, whose liveries put to shame the more modest garb of Lady Penelope’s, and even dimmed the glory of the suppressed coronet upon the buttons, than she began to vilipend and depreciate what had been so long the object of her curiosity.

‘This Mr. Tyrrel,’ she said, in a tone of authoritative decision, ‘seems after all a very ordinary sort of person, quite a commonplace man, who, she dared say, had considered his

condition, in going to the old alehouse, much better than they had done for him when they asked him to the public rooms. He had known his own place better than they did : there was nothing uncommon in his appearance or conversation — nothing at all *frappant* ; she scarce believed he could even draw that sketch. Mr. Winterblossom, indeed, made a great deal of it ; but then all the world knew that every scrap of engraving or drawing which Mr. Winterblossom contrived to make his own was, the instant it came into his collection, the finest thing that ever was seen ; that was the way with collectors — their geese were all swans.

‘And your ladyship’s swan has proved but a goose, my dearest Lady Pen,’ said Lady Binks.

‘*My* swan, dearest Lady Binks ! I really do not know how I have deserved the appropriation.’

‘Do not be angry, my dear Lady Penelope ; I only mean, that for a fortnight and more you have spoke constantly of this Mr. Tyrrel, and all dinner-time you spoke *to* him.’

The fair company began to collect around, at hearing the word ‘dear’ so often repeated in the same brief dialogue, which induced them to expect sport, and, like the vulgar on a similar occasion, to form a ring for the expected combatants.

‘He sat betwixt us, Lady Binks,’ answered Lady Penelope, with dignity. ‘You had your usual headache, you know, and, for the credit of the company, I spoke for one.’

‘For *two*, if your ladyship pleases,’ replied Lady Binks. ‘I mean,’ she added, softening the expression, ‘for yourself and me.’

‘I am sorry,’ said Lady Penelope, ‘I should have spoken for one who can speak so smartly for herself as my dear Lady Binks ; I did not, by any means, desire to engross the conversation. I repeat it, there is a mistake about this man.’

‘I think there is,’ said Lady Binks, in a tone which implied something more than mere assent to Lady Penelope’s proposition.

‘I doubt if he is an artist at all,’ said the Lady Penelope ; ‘or if he is, he must be doing things for some magazine, or encyclopædia, or some such matter.’

‘I doubt, too, if he be a professional artist,’ said Lady Binks. ‘If so, he is of the very highest class, for I have seldom seen a better-bred man.’

‘There are very well-bred artists,’ said Lady Penelope. ‘It is the profession of a gentleman.’

'Certainly,' answered Lady Binks; 'but the poorer class have often to struggle with poverty and dependence. In general society, they are like commercial people in presence of their customers; and that is a difficult part to sustain. And so you see them of all sorts — shy and reserved, when they are conscious of merit; petulant and whimsical, by way of showing their independence; intrusive, in order to appear easy; and sometimes obsequious and fawning, when they chance to be of a mean spirit. But you seldom see them quite at their ease; and therefore I hold this Mr. Tyrrel to be either an artist of the first class, raised completely above the necessity and degradation of patronage, or else to be no professional artist at all.'

Lady Penelope looked at Lady Binks with much such a regard as Balaam may have cast upon his ass when he discovered the animal's capacity for holding an argument with him. She muttered to herself —

'Mon âne parle, et même il parle bien !'

But, declining the altercation which Lady Binks seemed disposed to enter into, she replied, with good-humour, 'Well, dearest Rachel, we will not pull caps about this man — nay, I think your good opinion of him gives him new value in my eyes. That is always the way with us, my good friend! We may confess it when there are none of these conceited male wretches among us. We will know what he really is: he shall not wear fern-seed and walk among us invisible thus. What say you, Maria?'

'Indeed, I say, dear Lady Penelope,' answered Miss Digges, whose ready chatter we have already introduced to the reader, 'he is a very handsome man, though his nose is too big and his mouth too wide; but his teeth are like pearl, and he has such eyes! especially when your ladyship spoke to him. I don't think you looked at his eyes; they are quite deep and dark, and full of glow, like what you read to us in the letter from that lady about Robert Burns.'

'Upon my word, miss, you come on finely!' said Lady Penelope. 'One had need take care what they read or talk about before you, I see. Come, Jones, have mercy upon us — put an end to that symphony of tinkling cups and saucers, and let the first act of the tea-table begin, if you please.'

'Does her leddyship mean the grace!' said honest Mrs. Blower, for the first time admitted into this worshipful society, and busily employed in arranging an Indian handkerchief, that

might have made a mainsail for one of her husband's smuggling luggers, which she spread carefully on her knee to prevent damage to a flowered black silk gown from the repast of tea and cake, to which she proposed to do due honour — 'does her leddyship mean the grace? I see the minister is just coming in. Her leddyship waits till ye say a blessing, an ye please, sir.'

Mr. Winterblossom, who 'toddled' after the chaplain, his toe having given him an alert hint to quit the dining-table, though he saw every feature in the poor woman's face swoln with desire to procure information concerning the ways and customs of the place, passed on the other side of the way, regardless of her agony of curiosity.

A moment after, she was relieved by the entrance of Dr. Quackleben, whose maxim being that one patient was as well worth attention as another, and who knew by experience that the *honoraria* of a godly wife of the Bowhead were as apt to be forthcoming (if not more so) as my Lady Penelope's, he e'en sat himself quietly down by Mrs. Blower, and proceeded with the utmost kindness to inquire after her health, and to hope she had not forgotten taking a table-spoonful of spirits burnt to a *residuum*, in order to qualify the crudities.

'Indeed, doctor,' said the honest woman, 'I loot the brandy burn as lang as I dought look at the gude creature wasting itsell that gate; and then, when I was fain to put it out for very thrift, I did take a thimbleful of it, although it is not the thing I am used to, Dr. Quackleben, and I winna say but that it did me good.'

'Unquestionably, madam,' said the doctor, 'I am no friend to the use of alcohol in general, but there are particular cases — there are particular cases, Mrs. Blower. My venerated instructor, one of the greatest men in our profession that ever lived, took a wine-glassful of old rum, mixed with sugar, every day after his dinner.'

'Ay? dear heart, he would be a comfortable doctor that,' said Mrs. Blower. 'He wad maybe ken something of my case. Is he leevin' think ye, sir?'

'Dead for many years, madam,' said Dr. Quackleben; 'and there are but few of his pupils that can fill his place, I assure ye. If I could be thought an exception, it is only because I was a favourite. Ah! blessings on the old red cloak of him! It covered more of the healing science than the gowns of a whole modern university.'

'There is ane, sir,' said Mrs. Blower, 'that has been muckle recommended about Edinburgh — Macgregor, ¹ I think they ca' him; folk come far and near to see him.'

'I know whom you mean, ma'am — a clever man — no denying it — a clever man; but there are certain cases — yours, for example — and I think that of many that come to drink this water — which I cannot say I think he perfectly understands — hasty — very hasty and rapid. Now I — I give the disease its own way at first — then watch it, Mrs. Blower — watch the turn of the tide.'

'Ay, troth, that's true,' responded the widow; 'John Blower was aye watching turn of tide, puir man.'

'Then he is a starving doctor, Mrs. Blower — reduces diseases as soldiers do towns — by famine, not considering that the friendly inhabitants suffer as much as the hostile garrison — ahem!'

Here he gave an important and emphatic cough, and then proceeded.

'I am no friend either to excess or to violent stimulus, Mrs. Blower; but nature must be supported — a generous diet — cordials judiciously thrown in — not without the advice of a medical man — that is my opinion, Mrs. Blower, to speak as a friend; others may starve their patients if they have a mind.'

'It wadna do for me, the starving, Dr. Keekerben,' said the alarmed relict — 'it wadna do for me at a'. Just a' I can do to wear through the day with the sma' supports that nature requires — not a soul to look after me, doctor, since John Blower was ta'en awa'. Thank ye kindly, sir (to the servant who handed the tea) — thank ye, my bonny man (to the page who served the cake). Now, dinna ye think, doctor (in a low and confidential voice), that her leddyship's tea is rather of the weakliest — water bewitched, I think; and Mrs. Jones, as they ca' her, has cut the seedcake very thin?'

'It is the fashion, Mrs. Blower,' answered Dr. Quackleben; 'and her ladyship's tea is excellent. But your taste is a little chilled, which is not uncommon at the first use of the waters, so that you are not sensible of the flavour; we must support the system — reinforce the digestive powers; give me leave — you are a stranger, Mrs. Blower, and we must take care of you — I have an elixir which will put that matter to rights in a moment.'

So saying, Dr. Quackleben pulled from his pocket a small

¹ See Note 5.

portable case of medicines. 'Catch me without my tools,' he said; 'here I have the real useful pharmacopœia—the rest is all humbug and hard names: this little case, with a fortnight or month, spring and fall, at St. Ronan's Well, and no one will die till his day come.'

Thus boasting, the doctor drew from his case a large vial or small flask, full of a high-coloured liquid, of which he mixed three tea-spoonfuls in Mrs. Blower's cup, who, immediately afterwards, allowed that the flavour was improved beyond all belief, and that it was 'vera comfortable and restorative indeed.'

'Will it not do good to my complaints, doctor?' said Mr. Winterblossom, who had strolled towards them, and held out his cup to the physician.

'I by no means recommend it, Mr. Winterblossom,' said Dr. Quackleben, shutting up his case with great coolness; 'your case is œdematous, and you treat it your own way; you are as good a physician as I am, and I never interfere with another practitioner's patient.'

'Well, doctor,' said Winterblossom, 'I must wait till Sir Bingo comes in; he has a hunting-flask usually about him, which contains as good medicine as yours to the full.'

'You will wait for Sir Bingo some time,' said the doctor; 'he is a gentleman of sedentary habits: he has ordered another magnum.'

'Sir Bingo is an unco name for a man o' quality, dinna ye think sae, Dr. Cocklehen?' said Mrs. Blower. 'John Blower, when he was a wee bit in the wind's eye, as he ca'd it, puir fallow, used to sing a sang about a dog they ca'd Bingo, that suld hae belanged to a farmer.'

'Our Bingo is but a puppy yet, madam; or if a dog, he is a sad dog,' said Mr. Winterblossom, applauding his own wit by one of his own inimitable smiles.

'Or a mad dog, rather,' said Mr. Chatterly, 'for he drinks no water'; and he also smiled gracefully at the thoughts of having trumped, as it were, the president's pun.

'Twa pleasant men, doctor,' said the widow, 'and so is Sir Bungy too, for that matter; but O! is nae it a pity he should bide sae lang by the bottle? It was puir John Blower's faut too, that weary tippling; when he wan to the lee-side of a bowl of punch, there was nae raising him. But they are taking awa' the things, and, doctor, is it not an awfu' thing that the creature-comforts should hae been used without grace or

thanksgiving? That Mr. Chitterling, if he really be a minister, has muckle to answer for, that he neglects his Master's service.'

'Why, madam,' said the doctor, 'Mr. Chatterly is scarce arrived at the rank of a minister plenipotentiary.'

'A minister potentiary — ah, doctor, I doubt that is some jest of yours,' said the widow; 'that's sae like puir John Blower. When I wad hae had him gie up the "Lovely Peggy" ship and cargo — the vessel was named after me, Doctor Kittleben — to be remembered in the prayers o' the congregation, he wad say to me, "They may pray that stand the risk, Peggy Bryce, for I've made insurance." He was a merry man, doctor; but he had the root of the matter in him, for a' his light way of speaking, as deep as ony skipper that ever loosed anchor from Leith Roads. I hae been a forsaken creature since his death. O the weary days and nights that I have had! and the weight on the spirits — the spirits, doctor! — though I canna say I hae been easier since I hae been at the Wall than even now; if I kenn'd what I was awing ye for elickstir, doctor, for it's done me muckle heart's good, forbye the opening of my mind to you.'

'Fie, fie, ma'am,' said the doctor, as the widow pulled out a sealskin pouch, such as sailors carry tobacco in, but apparently well stuffed with bank-notes — 'fie, fie, madam — I am no apothecary — I have my diploma from Leyden — a regular physician, madam — the elixir is heartily at your service; and should you want any advice, no man will be prouder to assist you than your humble servant.'

'I am sure I am muckle obliged to your kindness, Dr. Kickalpin,' said the widow, folding up her pouch. 'This was puir John Blower's spleuchan, as they ca' it; I e'en wear it for his sake. He was a kind man, and left me comfortable in warld's gudes; but comforts hae their cumpers, — to be a lone woman is a sair weird, Dr. Kittlepin.'

Dr. Quackleben drew his chair a little nearer that of the widow, and entered into a closer communication with her, in a tone doubtless of more delicate consolation than was fit for the ears of the company at large.

One of the chief delights of a watering-place is, that every one's affairs seem to be put under the special surveillance of the whole company, so that, in all probability, the various flirtations, *liaisons*, and so forth, which naturally take place in the society, are not only the subject of amusement to the parties engaged, but also to the lookers on; that is to say,

generally speaking, to the whole community of which for the time the said parties are members. Lady Penelope, the presiding goddess of the region, watchful over all her circle, was not long of observing that the doctor seemed to be suddenly engaged in close communication with the widow, and that he had even ventured to take hold of her fair plump hand with a manner which partook at once of the gallant suitor and of the medical adviser.

'For the love of Heaven,' said her ladyship, 'who can that comely dame be on whom our excellent and learned doctor looks with such uncommon regard?'

'Fat, fair, and forty,' said Mr. Winterblossom; 'that is all I know of her—a mercantile person.'

'A carrack, sir president,' said the chaplain, 'richly laden with colonial produce, by name the Lovely Peggy Bryce—no master—the late John Blower of North Leith having pushed off his boat for the Stygian creek, and left the vessel without a hand on board.'

'The doctor,' said Lady Penelope, turning her glass towards them, 'seems willing to play the part of pilot.'

'I daresay he will be willing to change her name and register,' said Mr. Chatterly.

'He can be no less in common requital,' said Winterblossom. 'She has changed *his* name six times in the five minutes that I stood within hearing of them.'

'What do you think of the matter, my dear Lady Binks?' said Lady Penelope.

'Madam?' said Lady Binks, starting from a reverie, and answering as one who either had not heard or did not understand the question.

'I mean, what think you of what is going on yonder?'

Lady Binks turned her glass in the direction of Lady Penelope's glance, fixed the widow and the doctor with one bold fashionable stare, and then dropping her hand slowly, said with indifference, 'I really see nothing there worth thinking about.'

'I daresay it is a fine thing to be married,' said Lady Penelope; 'one's thoughts, I suppose, are so much engrossed with one's own perfect happiness, that they have neither time nor inclination to laugh like other folks. Miss Rachel Bonnyrigg would have laughed till her eyes ran over, had she seen what Lady Binks cares so little about. I daresay it must be an all-sufficient happiness to be married.'

'He would be a happy man that could convince your ladyship of that in good earnest,' said Mr. Winterblossom.

'Oh, who knows? the whim may strike me,' replied the lady; 'but no — no — no, and that is three times.'

'Say it sixteen times more,' said the gallant president, 'and let nineteen nay-says be a grant.'

'If I should say a thousand "noes," there exists not the alchemy in living man that could extract one "yes" out of the whole mass,' said her ladyship. 'Blessed be the memory of Queen Bess! She set us all an example to keep power when we have it. What noise is that?'

'Only the usual after-dinner quarrel,' said the divine. 'I hear the captain's voice, else most silent, commanding them to keep peace, in the devil's name and that of the ladies.'

'Upon my word, dearest Lady Binks, this is too bad of that lord and master of yours, and of Mowbray, who might have more sense, and of the rest of that claret-drinking set, to be quarrelling and alarming our nerves every evening with presenting their pistols perpetually at each other, like sportsmen confined to the house upon a rainy 12th of August. I am tired of the Peacemaker: he but skins the business over in one case to have it break out elsewhere. What think you, love, if we were to give out in orders that the next quarrel which may arise shall be *bona fide* fought to an end? We will all go out and see it, and wear the colours on each side; and if there should a funeral come of it, we will attend it in a body. Weeds are so becoming; are they not, my dear Lady Binks? Look at Widow Blower in her deep black; don't you envy her, my love?'

Lady Binks seemed about to make a sharp and hasty answer, but checked herself, perhaps under the recollection that she could not prudently come to an open breach with Lady Penelope. At the same moment the door opened, and a lady dressed in a riding-habit, and wearing a black veil over her hat, appeared at the entry of the apartment.

'Angels and ministers of grace!' exclaimed Lady Penelope, with her very best tragic start — 'my dearest Clara, why so late, and why thus? Will you step to my dressing-room; Jones will get you one of my gowns? We are just of a size, you know; do, pray, let me be vain of something of my own for once by seeing you wear it.'

This was spoken in the tone of the fondest female friendship, and at the same time the fair hostess bestowed on Miss Mow-

bray one of those tender caresses which ladies — God bless them! — sometimes bestow on each other with unnecessary prodigality, to the great discontent and envy of the male spectators.

‘You are fluttered, my dearest Clara — you are feverish — I am sure you are,’ continued the sweetly anxious Lady Penelope; ‘let me persuade you to lie down.’

‘Indeed, you are mistaken, Lady Penelope,’ said Miss Mowbray, who seemed to receive much as a matter of course her ladyship’s profusion of affectionate politeness. ‘I am heated, and my pony trotted hard, that is the whole mystery. Let me have a cup of tea, Mrs. Jones, and the matter is ended.’

‘Fresh tea, Jones, directly,’ said Lady Penelope, and led her passive friend to her own corner, as she was pleased to call the recess in which she held her little court; ladies and gentlemen courtesying and bowing as she passed, to which civilities the new guest made no more return than the most ordinary politeness rendered unavoidable.

Lady Binks did not rise to receive her, but sat upright in her chair, and bent her head very stiffly — a courtesy which Miss Mowbray returned in the same stately manner, without farther greeting on either side.

‘Now, wha can that be, doctor?’ said the Widow Blower — ‘mind ye have promised to tell me all about the grand folk — wha can that be that Leddy Penelope hauds such a racket wi’? and what for does she come wi’ a habit and a beaver-hat, when we are a’ (a glance at her own gown) in our silks and satins?’

‘To tell you who she is, my dear Mrs. Blower, is very easy,’ said the officious doctor. ‘She is Miss Clara Mowbray, sister to the lord of the manor — the gentleman who wears the green coat, with an arrow on the cape. To tell why she wears that habit, or does anything else, would be rather beyond doctor’s skill. Truth is, I have always thought she was a little — a very little — touched — call it nerves — hypochondria — or what you will.’

‘Lord help us, puir thing!’ said the compassionate widow. ‘And troth it looks like it. But it’s a shame to let her go loose, doctor; she might hurt hersell, or somebody. See, she has ta’en the knife! O, it’s only to cut a shave of the diet-loaf. She winna let the powder-monkey of a boy help her. There’s judgment in that though, doctor, for she can cut thick or thin as she likes. Dear me! she has not taken mair than a crumb

that ane would pit between the wires of a canary-bird's cage, after all. I wish she would lift up that lang veil or put off that riding-skirt, doctor. She should really be showed the regulations, Doctor Kickelshin.'

'She cares about no rules we can make, Mrs. Blower,' said the doctor; 'and her brother's will and pleasure, and Lady Penelope's whim of indulging her, carry her through in everything. They should take advice on her case.'

'Ay, truly, it's time to take advice, when young creatures like her caper in amang dressed leddies just as if they were come from scampering on Leith sands. Such a wark as my leddy makes wi' her, doctor! Ye would think they were baith fools of a feather.'

'They might have flown on one wing, for what I know,' said Dr. Quackleben; 'but there was early and sound advice taken in Lady Penelope's case. My friend, the late Earl of Featherhead, was a man of judgment — did little in his family but by rule of medicine — so that, what with the waters and what with my own care, Lady Penelope is only freakish — fanciful — that's all, and her quality bears it out; the peccant principle might have broken out under other treatment.'

'Ay, she has been weel-friended,' said the widow; 'but this bairn Mowbray, puir thing! how came she to be sae left to hersell?'

'Her mother was dead; her father thought of nothing but his sports,' said the doctor. 'Her brother was educated in England, and cared for nobody but himself, if he had been here. What education she got was at her own hand; what reading she read was in a library full of old romances; what friends or company she had was what chance sent her; then no family physician, not even a good surgeon, within ten miles! And so you cannot wonder if the poor thing became unsettled.'

'Puir thing! — no doctor, nor even a surgeon! But, doctor,' said the widow, 'maybe the puir thing had the enjoyment of her health, ye ken, and then ——'

'Ah! ha, ha! why *then*, madam, she needed a physician far more than if she had been delicate. A skilful physician, Mrs. Blower, knows how to bring down that robust health which is a very alarming state of the frame when it is considered *secundum artem*. Most sudden deaths happen when people are in a robust state of health. Ah! that state of perfect health is what the doctor dreads most on behalf of his patient.'

'Ay — ay, doctor? I am quite sensible, nae doubt,' said the

widow, 'of the great advantage of having a skeelfu' person about ane.'

Here the doctor's voice, in his earnestness to convince Mrs. Blower of the danger of supposing herself capable of living and breathing without a medical man's permission, sunk into a soft pleading tone, of which our reporter could not catch the sound. He was, as great orators will sometimes be, 'inaudible in the gallery.'

Meanwhile, Lady Penelope overwhelmed Clara Mowbray with her caresses. In what degree her ladyship, at her heart, loved this young person, might be difficult to ascertain, probably in the degree in which a child loves a favourite toy. But Clara was a toy not always to be come by — as whimsical in her way as her ladyship in her own, only that poor Clara's singularities were real, and her ladyship's chiefly affected. Without adopting the harshness of the doctor's conclusions concerning the former, she was certainly unequal in her spirits; and her occasional fits of levity were chequered by very long intervals of sadness. Her levity also appeared, in the world's eye, greater than it really was; for she had never been under the restraint of society which was really good, and entertained an undue contempt for that which she sometimes mingled with, having unhappily none to teach her the important truth, that some forms and restraints are to be observed, less in respect to others than to ourselves. Her dress, her manners, and her ideas were therefore very much her own; and though they became her wonderfully, yet, like Ophelia's garlands and wild snatches of melody, they were calculated to excite compassion and melancholy, even while they amused the observer.

'And why came you not to dinner? We expected you — your throne was prepared.'

'I had scarce come to tea,' said Miss Mowbray, 'of my own free will. But my brother says your ladyship proposes to come to Shaws Castle, and he insisted it was quite right and necessary, to confirm you in so flattering a purpose, that I should come and say, "Pray, do, Lady Penelope"; and so now here am I to say, "Pray, do come."'

'Is an invitation so flattering limited to me alone, my dear Clara? Lady Binks will be jealous.'

'Bring Lady Binks, if she has the condescension to honour us (a bow was very stiffly exchanged between the ladies); bring Mr. Springblossom — Winterblossom — and all the lions and lionesses; we have room for the whole collection. My

brother, I suppose, will bring his own particular regiment of bears, which, with the usual assortment of monkeys seen in all caravans, will complete the menagerie. How you are to be entertained at Shaws Castle is, I thank Heaven, not my business, but John's.'

'We shall want no formal entertainment, my love,' said Lady Penelope — '*a déjeuner à la fourchette*; we know, Clara, you would die of doing the honours of a formal dinner.'

'Not a bit; I should live long enough to make my will, and bequeath all large parties to Old Nick, who invented them.'

'Miss Mowbray,' said Lady Binks, who had been thwarted by this free-spoken young lady both in her former character of a coquette and romp and in that of a prude which she at present wore — 'Miss Mowbray declares for

Champagne and a chicken at last.'

'The chicken without the champagne, if you please,' said Miss Mowbray; 'I have known ladies pay dear to have champagne on the board. By the by, Lady Penelope, you have not your collection in the same order and discipline as Pidcock and Polito. There was much growling and snarling in the lower den when I passed it.'

'It was feeding-time, my love,' said Lady Penelope; 'and the lower animals of every class become pugnacious at that hour; you see all our safer and well-conditioned animals are loose, and in good order.'

'Oh yes — in the keeper's presence, you know. Well, I must venture to cross the hall again among all that growling and grumbling. I would I had the fairy prince's quarters of mutton to toss among them if they should break out — he, I mean, who fetched water from the Fountain of Lions. However, on second thoughts, I will take the back way and avoid them. What says honest Bottom? —

For if they should as lions come in strife
Into such place, 't were pity of their life.'

'Shall I go with you, my dear?' said Lady Penelope.

'No, I have too great a soul for that; I think some of them are lions only as far as the hide is concerned.'

'But why would you go so soon, Clara?'

'Because my errand is finished; have I not invited you and yours? and would not Lord Chesterfield himself allow I have done the polite thing?'

'But you have spoke to none of the company, how can you be so odd, my love?' said her ladyship.

'Why, I spoke to them all when I spoke to you and Lady Binks; but I am a good girl, and will do as I am bid.'

So saying, she looked round the company and addressed each of them with an affectation of interest and politeness, which thinly concealed scorn and contempt.

'Mr. Winterblossom, I hope the gout is better. Mr. Robert Rymer—I have escaped calling him Thomas for once—I hope the public give encouragement to the muses. Mr. Keelivine, I trust your pencil is busy. Mr. Chatterly, I have no doubt your flock improves. Dr. Quackleben, I am sure your patients recover. These are all the specials of the worthy company I know; for the rest, health to the sick and pleasure to the healthy!'

'You are not going in reality, my love?' said Lady Penelope. 'These hasty rides agitate your nerves—they do, indeed; you should be cautious. Shall I speak to Quackleben?'

'To neither quack nor quackle on my account, my dear lady. It is not as you would seem to say, by your winking at Lady Binks—it is not, indeed. I shall be no Lady Clementina, to be the wonder and pity of the spring of St. Ronan's; no Ophelia neither, though I will say with her, "Good-night, ladies—good-night, sweet ladies!" And now, not "my coach, my coach," but "my horse, my horse"!''

So saying, she tripped out of the room by a side passage, leaving the ladies looking at each other significantly, and shaking their heads with an expression of much import.

'Something has ruffled the poor unhappy girl,' said Lady Penelope; 'I never saw her so very odd before.'

'Were I to speak my mind,' said Lady Binks, 'I think, as Mrs. Highmore says in the farce, her madness is but a poor excuse for her impertinence.'

'Oh fie! my sweet Lady Binks,' said Lady Penelope, 'spare my poor favourite! You, surely, of all others, should forgive the excesses of an amiable eccentricity of temper. Forgive me, my love, but I must defend an absent friend. My Lady Binks, I am very sure, is too generous and candid to [feel]

Hate for arts which caused herself to rise.'

'Not being conscious of any high elevation, my lady,' answered Lady Binks, 'I do not know any arts I have been under the necessity of practising to attain it. I suppose a Scotch

lady of an ancient family may become the wife of an English baronet, and no very extraordinary great cause to wonder at it.'

'No, surely ; but people in this world will, you know, wonder at nothing,' answered Lady Penelope.

'If you envy me my poor quiz, Sir Bingo, I'll get you a better, Lady Pen.'

'I don't doubt your talents, my dear, but when I want one, I will get one for myself. But here comes the whole party of quizzes. Joliffe, offer the gentlemen tea ; then get the floor ready for the dancers, and set the card-tables in the next room.'

CHAPTER VIII

After Dinner

They draw the cork, they broach the barrel,
And first they kiss, and then they quarrel.

PRIOR.

IF the reader has attended much to the manners of the canine race, he may have remarked the very different manner in which the individuals of the different sexes carry on their quarrels among each other. The females are testy, petulant, and very apt to indulge their impatient dislike of each other's presence, or the spirit of rivalry which it produces, in a sudden bark and snap, which last is generally made as much at advantage as possible. But these ebullitions of peevishness lead to no very serious or prosecuted conflict: the affair begins and ends in a moment. Not so the ire of the male dogs, which, once produced and excited by growls of mutual offence and defiance, leads generally to a fierce and obstinate contest; in which, if the parties be dogs of game and well matched, they grapple, throttle, tear, roll each other in the kennel, and can only be separated by choking them with their own collars till they lose wind and hold at the same time, or by surprising them out of their wrath by sousing them with cold water.

The simile, though a currish one, will hold good in its application to the human race. While the ladies in the tea-room of the Fox Hotel were engaged in the light snappish velitation, or skirmish, which we have described, the gentlemen who remained in the parlour were more than once like to have quarrelled more seriously.

We have mentioned the weighty reasons which induced Mr. Mowbray to look upon the stranger whom a general invitation had brought into their society with unfavourable prepossessions; and these were far from being abated by the demeanour of Tyrrel, which, though perfectly well-bred, indicated a sense of

equality which the young laird of St. Ronan's considered as extremely presumptuous.

As for Sir Bingo, he already began to nourish the genuine hatred always entertained by a mean spirit against an antagonist before whom it is conscious of having made a dishonourable retreat. He forgot not the manner, look, and tone with which Tyrrel had checked his unauthorised intrusion; and though he had sunk beneath it at the moment, the recollection rankled in his heart as an affront to be avenged. As he drank his wine, courage, the want of which was, in his more sober moments, a check upon his bad temper, began to inflame his malignity, and he ventured upon several occasions to show his spleen by contradicting Tyrrel more flatly than good manners permitted upon so short an acquaintance, and without any provocation. Tyrrel saw his ill-humour and despised it, as that of an overgrown schoolboy, whom it was not worth his while to answer according to his folly.

One of the apparent causes of the baronet's rudeness was indeed childish enough. The company were talking of shooting, the most animating topic of conversation among Scottish country gentlemen of the younger class, and Tyrrel had mentioned something of a favourite setter, an uncommonly handsome dog, from which he had been for some time separated, but which he expected would rejoin him in the course of next week.

'A setter!' retorted Sir Bingo, with a sneer; 'a pointer I suppose you mean?'

'No, sir,' said Tyrrel; 'I am perfectly aware of the difference betwixt a setter and a pointer, and I know the old-fashioned setter is become unfashionable among modern sportsmen. But I love my dog as a companion as well as for his merits in the field; and a setter is more sagacious, more attached, and fitter for his place on the hearth-rug than a pointer; not,' he added, 'from any deficiency of intellects on the pointer's part, but he is generally so abused while in the management of brutal breakers and grooms, that he loses all excepting his professional accomplishments of finding and standing steady to game.'

'And who the d—l desires he should have more?' said Sir Bingo.

'Many people, Sir Bingo,' replied Tyrrel, 'have been of opinion that both dogs and men may follow sport indifferently well, though they do happen, at the same time, to be fit for mixing in friendly intercourse in society.'

'That is, for licking trenchers and scratching copper, I suppose,' said the baronet, *sotto voce*; and added, in a louder and more distinct tone, 'He never before heard that a setter was fit to follow any man's heels but a poacher's.'

'You know it now then, Sir Bingo,' answered Tyrrel; 'and I hope you will not fall into so great a mistake again.'

The Peacemaker here seemed to think his interference necessary, and, surmounting his taciturnity, made the following pithy speech:—'By Cot! and do you see, as you are looking for my opinion, I think there is no dispute in the matter; because, by Cot! it occurs to me, d'ye see, that ye are both right, by Cot! It may do fery well for my excellent friend Sir Bingo, who hath stables, and kennels, and what not, to maintain the six filthy prutes that are yelping and yowling all the tay, and all the neight too, under my window, by Cot! And if they are yelping and yowling there, may I never die but I wish they were yelping and yowling somewhere else. But then there is many a man who may be as cood a gentleman at the bottom as my worthy friend Sir Bingo, though it may be that he is poor; and if he is poor—and as if it might be my own case, or that of this honest gentleman, Mr. Tirl—is that a reason or a law that he is not to keep a prute of a tog, to help him to take his sports and his pleasures? and if he has not a stable or a kennel to put the crature into, must he not keep it in his pit of pedroom, or upon his parlour hearth, seeing that Luckie Dods would make the kitchen too hot for the paist; and so, if Mr. Tirl finds a setter more fitter for his purpose than a pointer, by Cot, I know no law against it, else may I never die the black death.'

If this oration appear rather long for the occasion, the reader must recollect that Captain MacTurk had in all probability the trouble of translating it from the periphrastic language of Ossian, in which it was originally conceived in his own mind.

The Man of Law replied to the Man of Peace, 'Ye are mistaken for ance in your life, captain, for there is a law against setters; and I will undertake to prove them to be the "lying dogs" which are mentioned in the auld Scots statute, and which all and sundry are discharged to keep, under a penalty of —'

Here the captain broke in, with a very solemn mien and dignified manner—'By Cot! Master Meiklewham, and I shall be asking what you mean by talking to me of peing mistaken, and apout lying togs, sir; because I would have you to know,

and to pelieve, and to very well consider, that I never was mistaken in my life, sir, unless it was when I took you for a gentleman.'

'No offence, captain,' said Mr. Meiklewham; 'dinna break the wand of peace, man, you that should be the first to keep it. He is as cankered,' continued the Man of Law, apart to his patron, 'as an auld Hieland terrier, that snaps at whatever comes near it; but I tell you ae thing, St. Ronan's, and that is on saul and conscience, that I believe this is the very lad Tirl that I raised a summons against before the justices — him and another hempie — in your father's time, for shooting on the Springwell Head muirs.'

'The devil you did, Mick!' replied the lord of the manor, also aside. 'Well, I am obliged to you for giving me some reason for the ill thoughts I had of him. I knew he was some trumpery scamp. I'll blow him, by ——'

'Whisht — stop — hush — haud your tongue, St. Ronan's — keep a calm sough. Ye see, I intended the process, by your worthy father's desire, before the quarter sessions; but I kenna — the auld sheriff-clerk stood the lad's friend, and some of the justices thought it was but a mistake of the marches, and sae we couldna get a judgment; and your father was very ill of the gout, and I was feared to vex him, and so I was fain to let the process sleep, for fear they had been assoilzied. Sae ye had better gang cautiously to wark, St. Ronan's, for though they were summoned, they were not convict.'

'Could you not take up the action again?' said Mr. Mowbray.

'Whew! it's been prescribed sax or seeven year syne. It is a great shame, St. Ronan's, that the game laws, whilk are the very best protection that is left to country gentlemen against the encroachment of their inferiors, rin sae short a course of prescription: a poacher may just jink ye back and forward like a flea in a blanket — wi' pardon — hap ye out of ae county and into anither at their pleasure, like pyots; and unless ye get your thum-nail on them in the very nick o' time, ye may dine on a dish of prescription and sup upon an absolvitor.'

'It is a shame indeed,' said Mowbray, turning from his confidant and agent, and addressing himself to the company in general, yet not without a peculiar look directed to Tyrrel.

'What is a shame, sir?' said Tyrrel, conceiving that the observation was particularly addressed to him.

'That we should have so many poachers upon our muirs, sir,' answered St. Ronan's. 'I sometimes regret having counte-

nanced the Well here, when I think how many guns it has brought on my property every season.'

'Hout fie! — hout awa', St. Ronan's!' said his Man of Law; 'no countenance the Waal? What would the countryside be without it, I would be glad to ken? It's the greatest improvement that has been made on this country since the year forty-five. Na — na, it's no the Waal that's to blame for the poaching and delinquencies on the game. We maun to the Aultoun for the howff of that kind of cattle. Our rules at the Waal are clear and express against trespassers on the game.'

'I can't think,' said the squire, 'what made my father sell the property of the old change-house yonder to the hag that keeps it open out of spite, I think, and to harbour poachers and vagabonds! I cannot conceive what made him do so foolish a thing!'

'Probably because your father wanted money, sir,' said Tyrrel, drily; 'and my worthy landlady, Mrs. Dods, had got some. You know, I presume, sir, that I lodge there?'

'Oh, sir,' replied Mowbray, in a tone betwixt scorn and civility, 'you cannot suppose the present company is alluded to; I only presumed to mention as a fact, that we have been annoyed with unqualified people shooting on our grounds, without either liberty or license. And I hope to have her sign taken down for it, that is all. There was the same plague in my father's days, I think, Mick?'

But Mr. Meiklewham, who did not like Tyrrel's looks so well as to induce him to become approver on the occasion, replied with an inarticulate grunt, addressed to the company, and a private admonition to his patron's own ear, 'to let sleeping dogs lie.'

'I can scarce forbear the fellow,' said St. Ronan's; 'and yet I cannot well tell where my dislike to him lies. But it would be d—d folly to turn out with him for nothing; and so, honest Mick, I will be as quiet as I can.'

'And that you may be so,' said Meiklewham, 'I think you had best take no more wine.'

'I think so too,' said the squire; 'for each glass I drink in his company gives me the heart-burn; yet the man is not different from other raffs either; but there is a something about him intolerable to me.'

So saying, he pushed back his chair from the table, and *regis ad exemplar* — after the pattern of the laird — all the company arose.

Sir Bingo got up with reluctance, which he testified by two or three deep growls, as he followed the rest of the company into the outer apartment, which served as an entrance-hall, and divided the dining-parlour from the tea-room, as it was called. Here, while the party were assuming their hats, for the purpose of joining the ladies' society, which old-fashioned folk used only to take up for that of going into the open air, Tyrrel asked a smart footman who stood near to hand him the hat which lay on the table beyond.

'Call your own servant, sir,' answered the fellow, with the true insolence of a pampered menial.

'Your master,' answered Tyrrel, 'ought to have taught you good manners, my friend, before bringing you here.'

'Sir Bingo Binks is my master,' said the fellow, in the same insolent tone as before.

'Now for it, Bingie,' said Mowbray, who was aware that the baronet's pot-courage had arrived at fighting-pitch.

'Yes!' said Sir Bingo aloud, and more articulately than usual, 'the fellow is my servant; what has any one to say to it?'

'I at least have my mouth stopped,' answered Tyrrel, with perfect composure. 'I should have been surprised to have found Sir Bingo's servant better bred than himself.'

'What d'ye mean by that, sir?' said Sir Bingo, coming up in an offensive attitude, for he was no mean pupil of the fives-court — 'what d'ye mean by that? D—n you, sir! I'll serve you out before you can say "dumpling."'

'And I, Sir Bingo, unless you presently lay aside that look and manner, will knock you down before you can cry "help."'

The visitor held in his hand a slip of oak, with which he gave a flourish, that, however slight, intimated some acquaintance with the noble art of single-stick. From this demonstration Sir Bingo thought it prudent somewhat to recoil, though backed by a party of friends, who, in their zeal for his honour, would rather have seen his bones broken in conflict bold than his honour injured by a discreditable retreat; and Tyrrel seemed to have some inclination to indulge them. But, at the very instant when his hand was raised with a motion of no doubtful import, a whispering voice, close to his ear, pronounced the emphatic words — 'Are you a man?'

Not the thrilling tone with which our inimitable Siddons used to electrify the scene, when she uttered the same whisper, ever had a more powerful effect upon an auditor than had these

unexpected sounds on him to whom they were now addressed. Tyrrel forgot everything — his quarrel — the circumstances in which he was placed — the company. The crowd was to him at once annihilated, and life seemed to have no other object than to follow the person who had spoken. But suddenly as he turned, the disappearance of the monitor was at least equally so, for, amid the group of commonplace countenances by which he was surrounded, there was none which assorted to the tone and words which possessed such a power over him. 'Make way,' he said to those who surrounded him; and it was in the tone of one who was prepared, if necessary, to make way for himself.

Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's stepped forward. 'Come, sir,' said he, 'this will not do; you have come here, a stranger among us, to assume airs and dignities which, by G—d, would become a duke or a prince! We must know who or what you are before we permit you to carry your high tone any farther.'

This address seemed at once to arrest Tyrrel's anger and his impatience to leave the company. He turned to Mowbray, collected his thoughts for an instant, and then answered him thus: 'Mr. Mowbray, I seek no quarrel with any one here; with you, in particular, I am most unwilling to have any disagreement. I came here by invitation, not certainly expecting much pleasure, but, at the same time, supposing myself secure from incivility. In the last point I find myself mistaken, and therefore wish the company good-night. I must also make my adieus to the ladies.'

So saying, he walked several steps, yet, as it seemed, rather irresolutely, towards the door of the card-room, and then, to the increased surprise of the company, stopped suddenly, and muttering something about the 'unfitness of the time,' turned on his heel, and bowing haughtily, as there was way made for him, walked in the opposite direction towards the door which led to the outer hall.

'D—me, Sir Bingo, will you let him off?' said Mowbray, who seemed to delight in pushing his friend into new scrapes. 'To him, man — to him; he shows the white feather.'

Sir Bingo, thus encouraged, planted himself with a look of defiance exactly between Tyrrel and the door; upon which the retreating guest, bestowing on him most emphatically the epithet 'fool,' seized him by the collar and flung him out of his way with some violence.

'I am to be found at the Old Town of St. Ronan's by whom-

soever has any concern with me.' Without waiting the issue of this aggression farther than to utter these words, Tyrrel left the hotel. He stopped in the courtyard, however, with the air of one uncertain whither he intended to go, and who was desirous to ask some question, which seemed to die upon his tongue. At length his eye fell upon a groom, who stood not far from the door of the inn, holding in his hand a handsome pony, with a side-saddle.

'Whose ——' said Tyrrel, but the rest of the question he seemed unable to utter.

The man, however, replied, as if he had heard the whole interrogation. 'Miss Mowbray's, sir, of St. Ronan's. She leaves directly, and so I am walking the pony — a clever thing, sir, for a lady.'

'She returns to Shaws Castle by the Buckstane road?'

'I suppose so, sir,' said the groom. 'It is the nighest, and Miss Clara cares little for rough roads. Zounds! she can spank it over wet and dry.'

Tyrrel turned away from the man, and hastily left the hotel; not, however, by the road which led to the Aultoun, but by a footpath among the natural copsewood, which, following the course of the brook, intersected the usual horse-road to Shaws Castle, the seat of Mr. Mowbray, at a romantic spot called the Buckstane.

In a small peninsula, formed by a winding of the brook, was situated, on a rising hillock, a large rough-hewn pillar of stone, said by tradition to commemorate the fall of a stag of unusual speed, size, and strength, whose flight, after having lasted through a whole summer's day, had there terminated in death, to the honour and glory of some ancient baron of St. Ronan's and of his stanch hounds. During the periodical cuttings of the copse, which the necessities of the family of St. Ronan's brought round more frequently than Ponty would have recommended, some oaks had been spared in the neighbourhood of this massive obelisk, old enough perhaps to have heard the whoop and halloo which followed the fall of the stag, and to have witnessed the raising of the rude monument, by which that great event was commemorated. These trees, with their broad spreading boughs, made a twilight even of noon-day; and, now that the sun was approaching its setting-point, their shade already anticipated night. This was especially the case where three or four of them stretched their arms over a deep gully, through which winded the horse-path to Shaws Castle, at

a point about a pistol-shot distant from the Buckstane. As the principal access to Mr. Mowbray's mansion was by a carriage-way which passed in a different direction, the present path was left almost in a state of nature, full of large stones, and broken by gullies — delightful, from the varied character of its banks, to the picturesque traveller, and most inconvenient, nay, dangerous, to him who had a stumbling horse.

The footpath to the Buckstane, which here joined the bridle-road, had been constructed, at the expense of a subscription, under the direction of Mr. Winterblossom, who had taste enough to see the beauties of this secluded spot, which was exactly such as in earlier times might have harboured the ambush of some marauding chief. This recollection had not escaped Tyrrel, to whom the whole scenery was familiar, who now hastened to the spot, as one which peculiarly suited his present purpose. He sat down by one of the larger projecting trees, and, screened by its enormous branches from observation, was enabled to watch the road from the hotel for a great part of its extent, while he was himself invisible to any who might travel upon it.

Meanwhile, his sudden departure excited a considerable sensation among the party whom he had just left, and who were induced to form conclusions not very favourable to his character. Sir Bingo, in particular, blustered loudly and more loudly, in proportion to the increasing distance betwixt himself and his antagonist, declaring his resolution to be revenged on the scoundrel for his insolence, to drive him from the neighbourhood, and I know not what other menaces of formidable import. The devil, in the old stories of *diablerie*, was always sure to start up at the elbow of any one who nursed diabolical purposes, and only wanted a little backing from the foul fiend to carry his imaginations into action. The noble Captain MacTurk had so far this property of his infernal majesty, that the least hint of an approaching quarrel drew him always to the vicinity of the party concerned. He was now at Sir Bingo's side, and was taking his own view of the matter, in his character of peacemaker.

'By Cot! and it's very exceedingly true, my goot friend, Sir Bince; and as you say, it concerns your honour, and the honour of the place, and credit and character of the whole company, by Cot! that this matter be properly looked after; for, as I think, he laid hands on your body, my excellent goot friend.'

'Hands, Captain MacTurk!' exclaimed Sir Bingo, in some

confusion. 'No, blast him, not so bad as that neither; if he had, I should have handed *him* over the window; but, by —, the fellow had the impudence to offer to collar me. I had just stepped back to square at him, when, curse me, the blackguard ran away.'

'Right — vara right, Sir Bingo,' said the Man of Law: 'a vara perfect blackguard, a poaching, sorning sort of fallow, that I will have scoured out of the country before he be three days aulder. Fash you your beard nae farther about the matter, Sir Bingo.'

'By Cot! but I can tell you, Mr. Meiklewham,' said the Man of Peace, with great solemnity of visage, 'that you are scalding your lips in other folks' kale, and that it is necessary for the credit, and honour, and respect of this company at the Well of St. Ronan's that Sir Bingo goes by more competent advice than yours upon the present occasion, Mr. Meiklewham; for, though your counsel may do very well in a small-debt court, here, do you see, Mr. Meiklewham, is a question of honour, which is not a thing in your line, as I take it.'

'No, before George! it is not,' answered Meiklewham; 'e'en take it all to yoursell, captain, and meikle ye are likely to make on 't.'

'Then,' said the captain, 'Sir Binco, I will beg the favour of your company to the smoking-room, where we may have a cigar and a glass of gin-twist; and we will consider how the honour of the company must be supported and upholden upon the present conjuncture.'

The baronet complied with this invitation, as much, perhaps, in consequence of the medium through which the captain intended to convey his warlike counsels as for the pleasure with which he anticipated the result of these counsels themselves. He followed the military step of his leader, whose stride was more stiff, and his form more perpendicular, when exalted by the consciousness of an approaching quarrel, to the smoking-room, where, sighing as he lighted his cigar, Sir Bingo prepared to listen to the words of wisdom and valour, as they should flow in mingled stream from the lips of Captain MacTurk.

Meanwhile, the rest of the company joined the ladies. 'Here has been Clara,' said Lady Penelope to Mr. Mowbray — 'here has been Miss Mowbray among us, like the ray of a sun which does but dazzle and die.'

'Ah, poor Clara,' said Mowbray; 'I thought I saw her thread her way through the crowd a little while since, but I was not sure.'

'Well,' said Lady Penelope, 'she has asked us all up to Shaws Castle on Thursday, to a *déjeuner à la fourchette*. I trust you confirm your sister's invitation, Mr. Mowbray?'

'Certainly, Lady Penelope,' replied Mowbray; 'and I am truly glad Clara has had the grace to think of it. How we shall acquit ourselves is a different question, for neither she nor I are much accustomed to play host or hostess.'

'Oh! it will be delightful, I am sure,' said Lady Penelope. 'Clara has a grace in everything she does; and you, Mr. Mowbray, can be a perfectly well-bred gentleman — when you please.'

'That qualification is severe. Well — good manners be my speed! I will certainly please to do my best when I see your ladyship at Shaws Castle, which has received no company this many a day. Clara and I have lived a wild life of it, each in their own way.'

'Indeed, Mr. Mowbray,' said Lady Binks, 'if I might presume to speak, I think you do suffer your sister to ride about a little too much without an attendant. I know Miss Mowbray rides as woman never rode before, but still an accident may happen.'

'An accident!' replied Mowbray. 'Ah, Lady Binks! accidents happen as frequently when ladies *have* attendants as when they are without them.'

Lady Binks, who, in her maiden state, had cantered a good deal about these woods under Sir Bingo's escort, coloured, looked spiteful, and was silent.

'Besides,' said John Mowbray, more lightly, 'where is the risk, after all? There are no wolves in our woods to eat up our pretty Red Riding Hoods; and no lions either — except those of Lady Penelope's train.'

'Who draw the car of Cybele,' said Mr. Chatterly.

Lady Penelope luckily did not understand the allusion, which was indeed better intended than imagined.

'Apropos!' she said; 'what have you done with the great lion of the day? I see Mr. Tyrrel nowhere. Is he finishing an additional bottle with Sir Bingo?'

'Mr. Tyrrel, madam,' said Mowbray, 'has acted successively the lion rampant and the lion passant: he has been quarrelsome and he has run away — fled from the ire of your doughty knight, Lady Binks.'

'I am sure I hope not,' said Lady Binks; 'my chevalier's unsuccessful campaigns have been unable to overcome his taste for quarrels; a victory would make a fighting man of him for life.'

'That inconvenience might bring its own consolations,' said Winterblossom, apart to Mowbray : 'quarrellers do not usually live long.'

'No — no,' replied Mowbray, 'the lady's despair, which broke out just now, even in her own despite, is quite natural — absolutely legitimate. Sir Bingo will give her no chance that way.'

Mowbray then made his bow to Lady Penelope, and in answer to her request that he would join the ball or the card-table, observed, that 'He had no time to lose ; that the heads of the old domestics at Shaws Castle would be by this time absolutely turned by the apprehensions of what Thursday was to bring forth ; and that, as Clara would certainly give no directions for the proper arrangements, it was necessary that he should take that trouble himself.'

'If you ride smartly,' said Lady Penelope, 'you may save even a temporary alarm, by overtaking Clara, dear creature, ere she gets home. She sometimes suffers her pony to go at will along the lane, as slow as Betty Foy's.'

'Ah, but then,' said little Miss Digges, 'Miss Mowbray sometimes gallops as if the lark was a snail to her pony, and it quite frights one to see her.'

The doctor touched Mrs. Blower, who had approached so as to be on the verge of the genteel circle, though she did not venture within it ; they exchanged sagacious looks and a most pitiful shake of the head. Mowbray's eye happened at that moment to glance on them ; and doubtless, notwithstanding their hasting to compose their countenances to a different expression, he comprehended what was passing through their minds, and perhaps it awoke a corresponding note in his own. He took his hat, and, with a cast of thought upon his countenance which it seldom wore, left the apartment. A moment afterwards his horse's feet were heard spurning the pavement, as he started off at a sharp pace.

'There is something singular about these Mowbrays to-night,' said Lady Penelope. 'Clara, poor dear angel, is always particular ; but I should have thought Mowbray had too much worldly wisdom to be fanciful. What are you consulting your souvenir for with such attention, my dear Lady Binks ?'

'Only for the age of the moon,' said her ladyship, putting the little tortoise-shell-bound calendar into her reticule ; and having done so, she proceeded to assist Lady Penelope in the arrangements for the evening.

CHAPTER IX

The Meeting

We meet as shadows in the land of dreams,
Which speak not but in signs.

Anonymous.

BEHIND one of the old oaks which we have described in the preceding chapter, shrouding himself from observation like a hunter watching for his game, or an Indian for his enemy, but with different, very different purpose, Tyrrel lay on his breast near the Buckstane, his eye on the horse-road which winded down the valley, and his ear alertly awake to every sound which mingled with the passing breeze or with the ripple of the brook.

‘To have met her in yonder congregated assembly of brutes and fools,’ such was a part of his internal reflections, ‘had been little less than an act of madness — madness almost equal in its degree to that cowardice which has hitherto prevented my approaching her, when our eventful meeting might have taken place unobserved. But now — now — my resolution is as fixed as the place is itself favourable. I will not wait till some chance again shall throw us together, with an hundred malignant eyes to watch, and wonder, and stare, and try in vain to account for the expression of feelings which I might find it impossible to suppress. Hark — hark ! I hear the tread of a horse. No — it was the changeful sound of the water rushing over the pebbles. Surely she cannot have taken the other road to Shaws Castle ! No — the sounds become distinct — her figure is visible on the path, coming swiftly forward. Have I the courage to show myself ? I have : the hour is come, and what must be shall be.’

Yet this resolution was scarcely formed ere it began to fluctuate, when he reflected upon the fittest manner of carrying it into execution. To show himself at a distance might give

the lady an opportunity of turning back and avoiding the interview which he had determined upon ; to hide himself till the moment when her horse, in rapid motion, should pass his lurking-place, might be attended with danger to the rider ; and while he hesitated which course to pursue, there was some chance of his missing the opportunity of presenting himself to Miss Mowbray at all. He was himself sensible of this, formed a hasty and desperate resolution not to suffer the present moment to escape, and, just as the ascent induced the pony to slacken its pace, Tyrrel stood in the middle of the defile, about six yards distant from the young lady.

She pulled up the reins and stopped as if arrested by a thunderbolt. 'Clara !' 'Tyrrel !' These were the only words which were exchanged between them, until Tyrrel, moving his feet as slowly as if they had been of lead, began gradually to diminish the distance which lay betwixt them. It was then that, observing his closer approach, Miss Mowbray called out with great eagerness — 'No nearer — no nearer ! So long have I endured your presence, but if you approach me more closely I shall be mad indeed !'

'What do you fear ?' said Tyrrel, in a hollow voice. 'What can you fear ?' and he continued to draw nearer, until they were within a pace of each other.

Clara, meanwhile, dropping her bridle, clasped her hands together, and held them up towards Heaven, muttering, in a voice scarcely audible, 'Great God ! if this apparition be formed by my heated fancy, let it pass away ; if it be real, enable me to bear its presence ! Tell me, I conjure you, are you Francis Tyrrel in blood and body, or is this but one of those wandering visions that have crossed my path and glared on me, but without daring to abide my steadfast glance ?'

'I am Francis Tyrrel,' answered he, 'in blood and body, as much as she to whom I speak is Clara Mowbray.'

'Then God have mercy on us both !' said Clara, in a tone of deep feeling.

'Amen !' said Tyrrel. 'But what avails this excess of agitation ? You saw me but now, Miss Mowbray. Your voice still rings in my ears. You saw me but now ; you spoke to me, and that when I was among strangers. Why not preserve your composure, when we are where no human eye can see — no human ear can hear ?'

'Is it so ?' said Clara ; 'and was it indeed yourself whom I saw even now ? I thought so, and something I said at the

time; but my brain has been but ill settled since we last met. But I am well now — quite well. I have invited all the people yonder to come to Shaws Castle — my brother desired me to do it; I hope I shall have the pleasure of seeing Mr. Tyrrel there, though I think there is some old grudge between my brother and you.'

'Alas! Clara, you mistake. Your brother I have scarcely seen,' replied Tyrrel, much distressed, and apparently uncertain in what tone to address her, which might soothe and not irritate her mental malady, of which he could now entertain no doubt.

'True — true,' she said, after a moment's reflection, 'my brother was then at college. It was my father — my poor father, whom you had some quarrel with. But you will come to Shaws Castle on Thursday at two o'clock? John will be glad to see you — he can be kind when he pleases — and then we will talk of old times. I must get on, to have things ready. Good evening.'

She would have passed him, but he took gently hold of the rein of her bridle. 'I will walk with you, Clara,' he said; 'the road is rough and dangerous, you ought not to ride fast — I will walk along with you, and we will talk of former times now, more conveniently than in company.'

'True — true — very true, Mr. Tyrrel; it shall be as you say. My brother obliges me sometimes to go into company at that hateful place down yonder; and I do so because he likes it, and because the folks let me have my own way, and come and go as I list. Do you know, Tyrrel, that very often when I am there, and John has his eye on me, I can carry it on as gaily as if you and I had never met?'

'I would to God we never had,' said Tyrrel, in a trembling voice, 'since this is to be the end of all!'

'And wherefore should not sorrow be the end of sin and of folly? And when did happiness come of disobedience? And when did sound sleep visit a bloody pillow? That is what I say to myself, Tyrrel, and that is what you must learn to say too, and then you will bear your burden as cheerfully as I endure mine. If we have no more than our deserts, why should we complain? You are shedding tears, I think. Is not that childish? They say it is a relief; if so, weep on, and I will look another way.'

Tyrrel walked on by the pony's side, in vain endeavouring to compose himself so as to reply.

'Poor Tyrrel,' said Clara, after she had remained silent for some time — 'poor Frank Tyrrel! Perhaps you will say in your turn, "Poor Clara"; but I am not so poor in spirit as you: the blast may bend, but it shall never break me.'

There was another long pause; for Tyrrel was unable to determine with himself in what strain he could address the unfortunate young lady, without awakening recollections equally painful to her feelings and dangerous, when her precarious state of health was considered. At length she herself proceeded: —

'What needs all this, Tyrrel? and, indeed, why came you here? Why did I find you but now brawling and quarrelling among the loudest of the brawlers and quarrellers of yonder idle and dissipated debauchees? You were used to have more temper — more sense. Another person — ay, another that you and I once knew — he might have committed such a folly, and he would have acted perhaps in character. But you, who pretend to wisdom, for shame — for shame! And, indeed, when we talk of that, what wisdom was there in coming hither at all? or what good purpose can your remaining here serve? Surely you need not come either to renew your own unhappiness or to augment mine?'

'To augment yours — God forbid!' answered Tyrrel. 'No; I came hither only because, after so many years of wandering, I longed to revisit the spot where all my hopes lay buried.'

'Ay, buried is the word,' she replied — 'crushed down and buried when they budded fairest. I often think of it, Tyrrel; and there are times when, Heaven help me! I can think of little else. Look at me; you remember what I was — see what grief and solitude have made me.'

She flung back the veil which surrounded her riding-hat, and which had hitherto hid her face. It was the same countenance which he had formerly known in all the bloom of early beauty; but though the beauty remained, the bloom was fled for ever. Not the agitation of exercise — not that which arose from the pain and confusion of this unexpected interview, had called to poor Clara's cheek even the momentary semblance of colour. Her complexion was marble-white, like that of the finest piece of statuary.

'Is it possible?' said Tyrrel; 'can grief have made such ravages?'

'Grief,' replied Clara, 'is the sickness of the mind, and its sister is the sickness of the body; they are twin-sisters, Tyrrel,

and are seldom long separate. Sometimes the body's disease comes first, and dims our eyes and palsies our hands before the fire of our mind and of our intellect is quenched. But mark me—soon after comes her cruel sister with her urn, and sprinkles cold dew on our hopes and on our loves, our memory, our recollections, and our feelings, and shows us that they cannot survive the decay of our bodily powers.'

'Alas!' said Tyrrel, 'is it come to this?'

'To this,' she replied, speaking from the rapid and irregular train of her own ideas, rather than comprehending the purport of his sorrowful exclamation — 'to this it must ever come, while immortal souls are wedded to the perishable substance of which our bodies are composed. There is another state, Tyrrel, in which it will be otherwise; God grant our time of enjoying it were come!'

She fell into a melancholy pause, which Tyrrel was afraid to disturb. The quickness with which she spoke marked but too plainly the irregular succession of thought, and he was obliged to restrain the agony of his own feelings, rendered more acute by a thousand painful recollections, lest, by giving way to his expressions of grief, he should throw her into a still more disturbed state of mind.

'I did not think,' she proceeded, 'that after so horrible a separation, and so many years, I could have met you thus calmly and reasonably. But although what we were formerly to each other can never be forgotten, it is now all over, and we are only friends. Is it not so?'

Tyrrel was unable to reply.

'But I must not remain here,' she said, 'till the evening grows darker on me. We shall meet again, Tyrrel — meet as friends, nothing more. You will come up to Shaws Castle and see me? No need of secrecy now: my poor father is in his grave, and his prejudices sleep with him; my brother John is kind, though he is stern and severe sometimes. Indeed, Tyrrel, I believe he loves me, though he has taught me to tremble at his frown when I am in spirits and talk too much. But he loves me — at least I think so, for I am sure I love him; and I try to go down amongst them yonder, and to endure their folly, and, all things considered, I do carry on the farce of life wonderfully well. We are but actors, you know, and the world but a stage.'

'And ours has been a sad and tragic scene,' said Tyrrel, in the bitterness of his heart, unable any longer to refrain from speech.

'It has indeed; but, Tyrrel, when was it otherwise with engagements formed in youth and in folly? You and I would, you know, become men and women while we were yet scarcely more than children. We have run, while yet in our nonage, through the passions and adventures of youth, and therefore we are now old before our day, and the winter of our life has come on ere its summer was well begun. O Tyrrel! often and often have I thought of this!—thought of it often! Alas, when will the time come that I shall be able to think of anything else?'

The poor young woman sobbed bitterly, and her tears began to flow with a freedom which they had not probably enjoyed for a length of time. Tyrrel walked on by the side of her horse, which now prosecuted its road homewards, unable to devise a proper mode of addressing the unfortunate young lady, and fearing alike to awaken her passions and his own. Whatever he might have proposed to say was disconcerted by the plain indications that her mind was clouded, more or less slightly, with a shade of insanity, which deranged, though it had not destroyed, her powers of judgment.

At length he asked her, with as much calmness as he could assume, if she was contented — if aught could be done to render her situation more easy — if there was aught of which she could complain which he might be able to remedy? She answered gently that she was calm and resigned when her brother would permit her to stay at home; but that when she was brought into society she experienced such a change as that which the water of the brook that slumbers in a crystalline pool of the rock may be supposed to feel when, gliding from its quiet bed, it becomes involved in the hurry of the cataract.

'But my brother Mowbray,' she said, 'thinks he is right, and perhaps he is so. There are things on which we may ponder too long; and were he mistaken, why should I not constrain myself in order to please him — there are so few left to whom I can now give either pleasure or pain? I am a gay girl, too, in conversation, Tyrrel, still as gay for a moment as when you used to chide me for my folly. So, now I have told you all, I have one question to ask on my part — one question — if I had but breath to ask it. Is *he* still alive?'

'He lives,' answered Tyrrel, but in a tone so low that nought but the eager attention which Miss Mowbray paid could possibly have caught such feeble sounds.

'Lives!' she exclaimed — 'lives! — he lives, and the blood on

your hand is not then indelibly imprinted. O Tyrrel, did you but know the joy which this assurance gives to me !'

'Joy !' replied Tyrrel — 'joy that the wretch lives who has poisoned our happiness for ever — lives, perhaps, to claim you for his own ?'

'Never — never shall he — dare he do so,' replied Clara, wildly, 'while water can drown, while cords can strangle, steel pierce — while there is a precipice on the hill, a pool in the river — never — never !'

'Be not thus agitated, my dearest Clara,' said Tyrrel. 'I spoke I know not what ; he lives indeed, but far distant, and, I trust, never again to revisit Scotland.'

He would have said more, but that, agitated with fear or passion, she struck her horse impatiently with her riding-whip. The spirited animal, thus stimulated and at the same time restrained, became intractable, and reared so much that Tyrrel, fearful of the consequences, and trusting to Clara's skill as a horsewoman, thought he best consulted her safety in letting go the rein. The animal instantly sprung forward on the broken and hilly path at a very rapid pace, and was soon lost to Tyrrel's anxious eyes.

As he stood pondering whether he ought not to follow Miss Mowbray towards Shaws Castle, in order to be satisfied that no accident had befallen her on the road, he heard the tread of a horse's feet advancing hastily in the same direction, leading from the hotel. Unwilling to be observed at this moment, he stepped aside under shelter of the underwood, and presently afterwards saw Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's, followed by a groom, ride hastily past his lurking-place, and pursue the same road which had been just taken by his sister. The presence of her brother seemed to assure Miss Mowbray's safety, and so removed Tyrrel's chief reason for following her. Involved in deep and melancholy reflection upon what had passed, nearly satisfied that his longer residence in Clara's vicinity could only add to her unhappiness and his own, yet unable to tear himself from that neighbourhood, or to relinquish feelings which had become entwined with his heartstrings, he returned to his lodgings in the Aultoun in a state of mind very little to be envied.

Tyrrel, on entering his apartment, found that it was not lighted, nor were the abigails of Mrs. Dods quite so alert as a waiter at Long's might have been to supply him with candles. Unapt at any time to exact much personal attendance, and desirous to shun at that moment the necessity of speaking to

any person whatever, even on the most trifling subject, he walked down into the kitchen to supply himself with what he wanted. He did not at first observe that Mrs. Dods herself was present in this the very centre of her empire, far less that a lofty air of indignation was seated on the worthy matron's brow. At first it only vented itself in broken soliloquy and interjections ; as, for example, 'Vera bonny wark this !—vera creditable wark, indeed ! a decent house to be disturbed at these hours. Keep a public—as weel keep a bedlam !'

Finding these murmurs attracted no attention, the dame placed herself betwixt her guest and the door, to which he was now retiring with his lighted candle, and demanded of him what was the meaning of such behaviour.

'Of what behaviour, madam ?' said her guest, repeating her question in a tone of sternness and impatience so unusual with him, that perhaps she was sorry at the moment that she had provoked him out of his usual patient indifference ; nay, she might even feel intimidated at the altercation she had provoked, for the resentment of a quiet and patient person has always in it something formidable to the professed and habitual grumbler. But her pride was too great to think of a retreat, after having sounded the signal for contest, and so she continued, though in a tone somewhat lowered.

'Maister Tirl, I wad but just ask you, that are a man of sense, whether I hae ony right to take your behaviour weel ? Here have you been these ten days and mair, eating the best, and drinking the best, and taking up the best room in my house ; and now to think of your gaun down and taking up with yon idle hare-brained cattle at the Waal—I maun e'en be plain wi' ye—I like nane of the fair-fashioned folk that can say "My jo," and think it no ; and therefore——'

'Mrs. Dods,' said Tyrrel, interrupting her, 'I have no time at present for trifles. I am obliged to you for your attention while I have been in your house ; but the disposal of my time, here or elsewhere, must be according to my own ideas of pleasure or business. If you are tired of me as a guest, send in your bill to-morrow.'

'My bill !' said Mrs. Dods—'my bill to-morrow ! And what for no wait till Saturday, when it may be cleared atween us, plack and bawbee, as it was on Saturday last ?'

'Well—we will talk of it to-morrow, Mrs. Dods. Good-night.' And he withdrew accordingly.

Luckie Dods stood ruminating for a moment. 'The deil's

in him,' she said, 'for he winna bide being thrawn. And I think the deil's in me too for thraving him, sic a canny lad, and sae gude a customer; and I am judging he has something on his mind; want of siller it canna be — I am sure if I thought that, I wadna care about my small thing. But want o' siller it canna be: he pays over the shillings as if they were slate stanes, and that's no the way that folk part with their siller when there's but little on't; I ken weel eneugh how a customer looks that's near the grund of the purse. Weel! I hope he winna mind onything of this nonsense the morn, and I'll try to guide my tongue something better. Hegh, sirs! but, as the minister says, it's an unruly member; troth, I am whiles ashamed o't mysell.'

CHAPTER X

Resources

Come, let me have thy counsel, for I need it ;
Thou art of those who better help their friends
With sage advice than usurers with gold,
Or brawlers with their swords ; I'll trust to thee,
For I ask only from thee words, not deeds.

The Devil hath met his Match.

THE day of which we last gave the events chanced to be Monday, and two days therefore intervened betwixt it and that for which the entertainment was fixed that was to assemble in the halls of the lord of the manor the flower of the company now at St. Ronan's Well. The interval was but brief for the preparations necessary on an occasion so unusual ; since the house, though delightfully situated, was in very indifferent repair, and for years had never received any visitors, except when some blythe bachelor or fox-hunter shared the hospitality of Mr. Mowbray—an event which became daily more and more uncommon ; for, as he himself almost lived at the Well, he generally contrived to receive his companions where it could be done without expense to himself. Besides, the health of his sister afforded an irresistible apology to any of those old-fashioned Scottish gentlemen who might be too apt (in the rudeness of more primitive days) to consider a friend's house as their own. Mr. Mowbray was now, however, to the great delight of all his companions, nailed down, by invitation given and accepted, and they looked forward to the accomplishment of his promise with the eagerness which the prospect of some entertaining novelty never fails to produce among idlers.

A good deal of trouble devolved on Mr. Mowbray and his trusty agent, Mr. Meiklewham, before anything like decent preparation could be made for the ensuing entertainment ; and they were left to their unassisted endeavours by Clara, who,

during both the Tuesday and Wednesday, obstinately kept herself secluded; nor could her brother, either by threats or flattery, extort from her any light concerning her purpose on the approaching and important Thursday. To do John Mowbray justice, he loved his sister as much as he was capable of loving anything but himself; and when, in several arguments, he had the mortification to find that she was not to be prevailed on to afford her assistance, he, without complaint, quietly set himself to do the best he could by his own unassisted judgment or opinion with regard to the necessary preparations.

This was not, at present, so easy a task as might be supposed; for Mowbray was ambitious of that character of *ton* and elegance which masculine faculties alone are seldom capable of attaining on such momentous occasions. The more solid materials of a collation were indeed to be obtained for money from the next market-town, and were purchased accordingly; but he felt it was likely to present the vulgar plenty of a farmer's feast, instead of the elegant entertainment which might be announced in a corner of the county paper as given by John Mowbray, Esq., of St. Ronan's to the gay and fashionable company assembled at that celebrated spring. There was likely to be all sorts of error and irregularity in dishing and in sending up; for Shaws Castle boasted neither an accomplished housekeeper nor a kitchenmaid with a hundred pair of hands to execute her mandates. All the domestic arrangements were on the minutest system of economy consistent with ordinary decency, except in the stables, which were excellent and well kept. But can a groom of the stables perform the labours of a groom of the chambers? or can the gamekeeper arrange in tempting order the carcasses of the birds he has shot, strew them with flowers, and garnish them with piquant sauces? It would be as reasonable to expect a gallant soldier to act as undertaker, and conduct the funeral of the enemy he has slain.

In a word, Mowbray talked, and consulted, and advised, and squabbled with the deaf cook and a little old man whom he called the butler, until he at length perceived so little chance of bringing order out of confusion, or making the least advantageous impression on such obdurate understandings as he had to deal with, that he fairly committed the whole matter of the collation, with two or three hearty curses, to the charge of the officials principally concerned, and proceeded to take the state of the furniture and apartments under his consideration.

Here he found himself almost equally helpless ; for what male wit is adequate to the thousand little coquetries practised in such arrangements ? How can masculine eyes judge of the degree of *demi-jour* which is to be admitted into a decorated apartment, or discriminate where the broad light should be suffered to fall on a tolerable picture, where it should be excluded, lest the stiff daub of a periwigged grandsire should become too rigidly prominent ? And if men are unfit for weaving such a fairy web of light and darkness as may best suit furniture, ornaments, and complexions, how shall they be adequate to the yet more mysterious office of arranging, while they disarrange, the various movables in the apartment, so that, while all has the air of negligence and chance, the seats are placed as if they had been transported by a wish to the spot most suitable for accommodation ? Stiffness and confusion are at once avoided, the company are neither limited to a formal circle of chairs nor exposed to break their noses over wandering stools ; but the arrangements seem to correspond to what ought to be the tone of the conversation — easy, without being confused, and regulated, without being constrained or stiffened.

Then how can a clumsy male wit attempt the arrangement of all the *chiffonerie*, by which old snuff-boxes, heads of canes, pomander boxes, lamer beads, and all the trash usually found in the pigeon-holes of the bureaux of old-fashioned ladies, may be now brought into play, by throwing them, carelessly grouped with other unconsidered trifles, such as are to be seen in the windows of a pawnbroker's shop, upon a marble *encognure* or a mosaic work-table, thereby turning to advantage the trash and trinketry which all the old maids or magpies who have inhabited the mansion for a century have contrived to accumulate. With what admiration of the ingenuity of the fair artist have I sometimes pried into these miscellaneous groups of *pseudo-bijouterie*, and seen the great-grandsire's thumb-ring couchant with the coral and bells of the first-born, and the boatswain's whistle of some old naval uncle, or his silver tobacco-box, redolent of Oronoko, happily grouped with the mother's ivory comb-case, still odorous of musk, and with some virgin aunt's tortoise-shell spectacle-case, and the eagle's talon of ebony with which, in the days of long and stiff stays, our grandmothers were wont to alleviate any little irritation in their back or shoulders ! Then there was the silver strainer, on which, in more economical times than ours, the lady of the house placed the tea-leaves, after the very last drop had been

exhausted, that they might afterwards be hospitably divided among the company, to be eaten with sugar and with bread and butter. Blessings upon a fashion which has rescued from the claws of abigails and the melting-pot of the silversmith those neglected *cimelia*, for the benefit of antiquaries and the decoration of side-tables? But who shall presume to place them there, unless under the direction of female taste? and of that Mr. Mowbray, though possessed of a large stock of such treasures, was for the present entirely deprived.

This digression upon his difficulties is already too long, or I might mention the laird's inexperience in the art of making the worse appear the better garnishment, of hiding a darned carpet with a new floor-cloth, and flinging an Indian shawl over a faded and threadbare sofa. But I have said enough, and more than enough, to explain his dilemma to an unassisted bachelor, who, without mother, sister, or cousin, without skilful house-keeper, or experienced clerk of the kitchen, or valet of parts and figure, adventures to give an entertainment, and aspires to make it elegant and *comme il faut*.

The sense of his insufficiency was the more vexatious to Mowbray, as he was aware he would find sharp critics in the ladies, and particularly in his constant rival, Lady Penelope Penfeather. He was, therefore, incessant in his exertions; and for two whole days ordered and disordered, demanded, commanded, countermanded, and reprimanded without pause or cessation. The companion, for he could not be termed an assistant, of his labours was his trusty agent, who trotted from room to room after him, affording him exactly the same degree of sympathy which a dog doth to his master when distressed in mind, by looking in his face from time to time with a piteous gaze, as if to assure him that he partakes of his trouble, though he neither comprehends the cause or the extent of it, nor has in the slightest degree the power to remove it.

At length, when Mowbray had got some matters arranged to his mind, and abandoned a great many which he would willingly have put in better order, he sat down to dinner upon the Wednesday preceding the appointed day with his worthy aide-de-camp, Mr. Meiklewham; and after bestowing a few muttered curses upon the whole concern, and the fantastic old maid who had brought him into the scrape, by begging an invitation, declared that all things might now go to the devil their own way, for so sure as his name was John Mowbray he would trouble himself no more about them.

Keeping this doughty resolution, he sat down to dinner with his counsel learned in the law; and speedily they despatched the dish of chops which was set before them, and the better part of the bottle of old port which served for its menstruum.

'We are well enough now,' said Mowbray, 'though we have had none of their d—d kickshaws.'

'A wamefou' is a wamefou,' said the writer, swabbing his greasy chops, 'whether it be of the barleymeal or the bran.'

'A cart-horse thinks so,' said Mowbray; 'but we must do as others do, and gentlemen and ladies are of a different opinion.'

'The waur for themselves and the country baith, St. Ronan's; it's the jinketing and the jirbling wi' tea and wi' trumpery that brings our nobles to ninepence, and mony a het ha'-house to a hired lodging in the Abbey.'

The young gentleman paused for a few minutes, filled a bumper, and pushed the bottle to the senior, then said abruptly, 'Do you believe in luck, Mick?'

'In luck!' answered the attorney; 'what do you mean by the question?'

'Why, because I believe in luck myself—in a good or bad run of luck at cards.'

'You wad have mair luck the day if you had never touched them,' replied his confidant.

'That is not the question now,' said Mowbray; 'but what I wonder at is the wretched chance that has attended us miserable lairds of St. Ronan's for more than a hundred years, that we have always been getting worse in the world, and never better. Never has there been such a backsliding generation, as the parson would say: half the country once belonged to my ancestors, and now the last furrows of it seem to be flying.'

'Fleeing!' said the writer, 'they are barking and fleeing baith. This Shaws Castle here, I'se warrant it flee up the chimney after the rest, were it not weel fastened down with your grandfather's tailzie.'

'Damn the tailzie!' said Mowbray. 'If they had meant to keep up their estate, they should have entailed it when it was worth keeping; to tie a man down to such an insignificant thing as St. Ronan's is like tethering a horse on six rods of a Highland moor.'

'Ye have broke weel in on the mailing by your fens down at the Well,' said Meiklewham, 'and raxed ower the tether maybe a wee bit farther than ye had ony right to do.'

'It was by your advice, was it not?' said the laird.

'I'se ne'er deny it, St. Ronan's,' answered the writer; 'but I am such a gude-natured guse, that I just set about pleasing you as an auld wife pleases a bairn.'

'Ay,' said the man of pleasure, 'when she reaches it a knife to cut its own fingers with. These acres would have been safe enough if it had not been for your d—d advice.'

'And yet you were grumbling e'en now,' said the man of business, 'that you have not the power to gar the whole estate flee like a wild duck across a bog? Troth, you need care little about it; for if you have incurred an irritancy — and sae thinks Mr. Wisebehind, the advocate, upon an A. B. memorial that I laid before him — your sister, or your sister's goodman, if she should take the fancy to marry, might bring a declarator and evict St. Ronan's frae ye in the course of twa or three sessions.'

'My sister will never marry,' said John Mowbray.

'That's easily said,' replied the writer; 'but as broken a ship's come to land. If ony body kenn'd o' the chance she has o' the estate, there's mony a weel-doing man would think little of the bee in her bonnet.'

'Harkye, Mr. Meiklewham,' said the laird, 'I will be obliged to you if you will speak of Miss Mowbray with the respect due to her father's daughter and my sister.'

'Nae offence, St. Ronan's — nae offence,' answered the Man of Law; 'but ilka man maun speak sae as to be understood — that is, when he speaks about business. Ye ken yoursell, that Miss Clara is no just like other folk; and were I you — it's my duty to speak plain — I wad e'en gie in a bit scroll of a petition to the Lords, to be appointed *curator bonis*, in respect of her incapacity to manage her own affairs.'

'Meiklewham,' said Mowbray, 'you are a ——' and then stopped short.

'What am I, Mr. Mowbray?' said Meiklewham, somewhat sternly — 'what am I? I wad be glad to ken what I am.'

'A very good lawyer, I daresay,' replied St. Ronan's, who was too much in the power of his agent to give way to his first impulse. 'But I must tell you, that rather than take such a measure against poor Clara as you recommend, I would give her up the estate, and become a hostler or a postilion for the rest of my life.'

'Ah, St. Ronan's,' said the Man of Law, 'if you had wished to keep up the auld house, you should have taken another trade than to become a hostler or a postilion. What ailed you, man, but to have been a lawyer as weel as other folk?

My auld maister had a wee bit Latin about *rerum dominos gentemque togatam*, whilk signified, he said, that all lairds should be lawyers.'

'All lawyers are likely to become lairds, I think,' replied Mowbray: 'they purchase our acres by the thousand, and pay us, according to the old story, with a multiplepoinding, as your learned friends call it, Mr. Meiklewham.'

'Weel, and mightna you have purchased as weel as o'her folk?'

'Not I,' replied the laird; 'I have no turn for that service. I should only have wasted bombazine on my shoulders and flour upon my three-tailed wig — should but have lounged away my mornings in the Outer House, and my evenings at the play-house, and acquired no more law than what would have made me a wise justice at a small-debt court.'

'If you gained little, you would have lost as little,' said Meiklewham; 'and albeit ye were nae great gun at the bar, ye might aye have gotten a sherifffdom or a commissaryship amang the lave, to keep the banes green; and sae ye might have saved your estate from deteriorating, if ye didna mend it muckle.'

'Yes, but I could not have had the chance of doubling it, as I might have done,' answered Mowbray, 'had that inconstant jade, Fortune, but stood a moment faithful to me. I tell you, Mick, that I have been, within this twelvemonth, worth a hundred thousand — worth fifty thousand — worth nothing but the remnant of this wretched estate, which is too little to do one good while it is mine, though, were it sold, I could start again and mend my hand a little.'

'Ay — ay, just fling the helve after the hatchet,' said his legal adviser, 'that's a' you think of. What signifies winning a hundred thousand pounds, if you win them to lose them a' again?'

'What signifies it?' replied Mowbray. 'Why, it signifies as much to a man of spirit as having won a battle signifies to a general; no matter that he is beaten afterwards in his turn, he knows there is luck for him as well as others, and so he has spirit to try it again. Here is the young Earl of Etherington will be amongst us in a day or two. They say he is up to everything; if I had but five hundred to begin with, I should be soon up to him.'

'Mr. Mowbray,' said Meiklewham, 'I am sorry for ye. I have been your house's man-of-business — I may say, in some

measure, your house's servant — and now I am to see an end of it all, and just by the lad that I thought maist likely to set it up again better than ever; for, to do ye justice, you have aye had an ee to your ain interest, sae far as your lights gaed. It brings tears into my auld een.'

'Never weep for the matter, Mick,' answered Mowbray; 'some of it will stick, my old boy, in your pockets, if not in mine: your service will not be altogether gratuitous, my old friend — the labourer is worthy of his hire.'

'Weel I wot is he,' said the writer; 'but double fees would hardly carry folk through some wark. But if ye will have siller, ye maun have siller; but, I warrant, it goes just where the rest gaed.'

'No, by twenty devils!' exclaimed Mowbray, 'to fail this time is impossible. Jack Wolverine was too strong for Etherington at anything he could name, and I can beat Wolverine from the Land's-End to Johnnie Groat's; but there must be something to go upon — the blunt must be had, Mick.'

'Very likely — nae doubt — that is always provided it *can* be had,' answered the legal adviser.

'That's your business, my old cock,' said Mowbray. 'This youngster will be here perhaps to-morrow, with money in both pockets: he takes up his rents as he comes down, Mick — think of that, my old friend.'

'Weel for them that have rents to take up,' said Meiklewham; 'ours are lying rather ower low to be lifted at present. But are you sure this earl is a man to mell with — are you sure ye can win of him, and that if you do, he can pay his losings, Mr. Mowbray? Because I have kenn'd mony ane come for wool and gang hame shorn; and though ye are a clever young gentleman, and I am bound to suppose ye ken as much about life as most folk, and all that, yet some gate or other ye have aye come off at the losing hand, as ye have ower much reason to ken this day; howbeit —'

'O, the devil take your gossip, my dear Mick! If you can give no help, spare drowning me with your pother. Why, man, I was a fresh hand — had my apprentice-fees to pay, and these are no trifles, Mick. But what of that? I am free of the company now, and can trade on my own bottom.'

'Aweel — aweel, I wish it may be sae,' said Meiklewham.

'It will be so, and it shall be so, my trusty friend,' replied Mowbray, cheerily, 'so you will but help me to the stock to trade with.'

'The stock! what d'ye ca' the stock? I ken nae stock that ye have left.'

'But *you* have plenty, my old boy. Come, sell out a few of your three per cents; I will pay difference — interest — exchange — everything.'

'Ay — ay, everything or naething,' answered Meiklewham; 'but as you are sae very pressing, I hae been thinking — Whan is the siller wanted?'

'This instant — this day — to-morrow at farthest!' exclaimed the proposed borrower.

'Wh—ew!' whistled the lawyer, with a long prolongation of the note, 'the thing is impossible.'

'It must be, Mick, for all that,' answered Mr. Mowbray, who knew by experience that 'impossible,' when uttered by his accommodating friend in this tone, meant only, when interpreted, extremely difficult and very expensive.

'Then it must be by Miss Clara selling her stock, now that ye speak of stock,' said Meiklewham; 'I wonder ye didna think of this before.'

'I wish you had been dumb rather than that you had mentioned it now,' said Mowbray, starting as if stung by an adder. 'What, Clara's pittance! — the trifle my aunt left her for her own fanciful expenses — her own little private store, that she puts to so many good purposes. Poor Clara, that has so little! And why not rather your own, Master Meiklewham, who call yourself the friend and servant of our family?'

'Ay, St. Ronan's,' answered Meiklewham, 'that is a' very true, but service is nae inheritance; and as for friendship, it begins at hame, as wise folk have said lang before our time. And for that matter, I think they that are nearest sib should take maist risk. You are nearer and dearer to your sister, St. Ronan's, than you are to poor Saunders Meiklewham, that hasna sae muckle gentle blood as would supper up an hungry flea.'

'I will not do this,' said St. Ronan's, walking up and down with much agitation; for, selfish as he was, he loved his sister, and loved her the more on account of those peculiarities which rendered his protection indispensable to her comfortable existence. 'I will not,' he said, 'pillage her, come on 't what will. I will rather go a volunteer to the Continent, and die like a gentleman.'

He continued to pace the room in a moody silence, which began to disturb his companion, who had not been hitherto

accustomed to see his patron take matters so deeply. At length he made an attempt to attract the attention of the silent and sullen ponderer.

'Mr. Mowbray ——' No answer. 'I was saying, St. Ronan's ——' Still no reply. 'I have been thinking about this matter, and ——'

'And *what*, sir?' said St. Ronan's, stopping short, and speaking in a stern tone of voice.

'And, to speak truth, I see little feasibility in the matter any way; for if ye had the siller in your pocket to-day, it would be a' in the Earl of Etherington's the morn.'

'Pshaw! you are a fool,' answered Mowbray.

'That is not unlikely,' said Meiklewham; 'but so is Sir Bingo Binks, and yet he's had the better of you, St. Ronan's, this twa or three times.'

'It is false! he has not,' answered St. Ronan's, fiercely.

'Weel I wot,' resumed Meiklewham, 'he took you in about the saumon fish, and some other wager ye lost to him this very day [two days ago].'

'I tell you once more, Meiklewham, you are a fool, and no more up to my trim than you are to the longitude. Bingo is got shy. I must give him a little line, that is all; then I shall strike him to purpose. I am as sure of him as I am of the other. I know the fly they will both rise to; this cursed want of five hundred will do me out of ten thousand!'

'If you are so certain of being the bangster — so very certain, I mean, of sweeping stakes — what harm will Miss Clara come to by your having the use of her siller? You can make it up to her for the risk ten times told.'

'And so I can, by Heaven!' said St. Ronan's. 'Mick, you are right, and I am a scrupulous, chicken-hearted fool. Clara shall have a thousand for her poor five hundred — she shall, by ——. And I will carry her to Edinburgh for a season, or perhaps to London, and we will have the best advice for her case, and the best company to divert her. And if they think her a little odd — why, d—me, I am her brother, and will bear her through it. Yes — yes, you're right; there can be no hurt in borrowing five hundred of her for a few days, when such profit may be made on 't, both for her and me. Here, fill the glasses, my old boy, and drink success to it, for you are right.'

'Here is success to it, with all my heart,' answered Meiklewham, heartily glad to see his patron's sanguine temper arrive at this desirable conclusion, and yet willing to hedge in his own

credit; 'but it is *you* are right, and not *me*, for I advise nothing except on your assurances that you can make your ain of this English earl and of this Sir Bingo; and if you can but do that, I am sure it would be unwise and unkind in any one of your friends to stand in your light.'

'True, Mick — true,' answered Mowbray. 'And yet dice and cards are but bones and pasteboard, and the best horse ever started may slip a shoulder before he get to the winning-post; and so I wish Clara's venture had not been in such a bottom. But, hang it, care killed a cat; I can hedge as well as any one, if the odds turn up against me; so let us have the cash, Mick.'

'Aha! but there go two words to that bargain: the stock stands in my name and Tam Turnpenny the banker's, as trustees for Miss Clara. Now, get you her letter to us, desiring us to sell out and to pay you the proceeds, and Tam Turnpenny will let you have five hundred pounds *instantly*, on the faith of the transaction; for I fancy you would desire a' the stock to be sold out, and it will produce more than six hundred or seven hundred pounds either; and I reckon you will be selling out the whole, it's needless making twa bites of a cherry.'

'True,' answered Mowbray; 'since we must be rogues, or something like it, let us make it worth our while at least; so give me a form of the letter, and Clara shall copy it — that is, if she consents; for you know she can keep her own opinion as well as any other woman in the world.'

'And that,' said Meiklewham, 'is as the wind will keep its way, preach to it as ye like. But if I might advise about Miss Clara, I wad say naething mair than that I was stressed for the penny money; for I mistake her muckle if she would like to see you ganging to pitch and toss wi' this lord and tither baronet for her aunt's three per cents. I ken she has some queer notions: she gies away the feck of the dividends on that very stock in downright charity.'

'And I am in hazard to rob the poor as well as my sister!' said Mowbray, filling once more his own glass and his friend's. 'Come, Mick, no skylights; here is Clara's health. She is an angel, and I am — what I will not call myself, and suffer no other man to call me. But I shall win this time — I am sure I shall, since Clara's fortune depends upon it.'

'Now, I think, on the other hand,' said Meiklewham, 'that if anything should chance wrang — and Heaven kens that the best-laid schemes will gang ajee, — it will be a great comfort to think that the ultimate losers will only be the poor folk, that

have the parish between them and absolute starvation ; if your sister spent her ain siller, it would be a very different story.'

'Hush, Mick—for God's sake, hush, mine honest friend,' said Mowbray ; 'it is quite true. Thou art a rare counsellor in time of need, and hast as happy a manner of reconciling a man's conscience with his necessities as might set up a score of casuists ; but beware, my most zealous counsellor and confessor, how you drive the nail too far. I promise you some of the chaffing you are at just now rather abates my pluck. Well, give me your scroll ; I will to Clara with it, though I would rather meet the best shot in Britain, with ten paces of green sod betwixt us.' So saying, he left the apartment.

credit; 'but it is *you* are right, and not *me*, for I advise nothing except on your assurances that you can make your ain of this English earl and of this Sir Bingo; and if you can but do that, I am sure it would be unwise and unkind in any one of your friends to stand in your light.'

'True, Mick — true,' answered Mowbray. 'And yet dice and cards are but bones and pasteboard, and the best horse ever started may slip a shoulder before he get to the winning-post; and so I wish Clara's venture had not been in such a bottom. But, hang it, care killed a cat; I can hedge as well as any one, if the odds turn up against me; so let us have the cash, Mick.'

'Aha! but there go two words to that bargain: the stock stands in my name and Tam Turnpenny the banker's, as trustees for Miss Clara. Now, get you her letter to us, desiring us to sell out and to pay you the proceeds, and Tam Turnpenny will let you have five hundred pounds *instantly*, on the faith of the transaction; for I fancy you would desire a' the stock to be sold out, and it will produce more than six hundred or seven hundred pounds either; and I reckon you will be selling out the whole, it's needless making twa bites of a cherry.'

'True,' answered Mowbray; 'since we must be rogues, or something like it, let us make it worth our while at least; so give me a form of the letter, and Clara shall copy it — that is, if she consents; for you know she can keep her own opinion as well as any other woman in the world.'

'And that,' said Meiklewham, 'is as the wind will keep its way, preach to it as ye like. But if I might advise about Miss Clara, I wad say naething mair than that I was stressed for the penny money; for I mistake her muckle if she would like to see you ganging to pitch and toss wi' this lord and tither baronet for her aunt's three per cents. I ken she has some queer notions: she gies away the feck of the dividends on that very stock in downright charity.'

'And I am in hazard to rob the poor as well as my sister!' said Mowbray, filling once more his own glass and his friend's. 'Come, Mick, no skylights; here is Clara's health. She is an angel, and I am — what I will not call myself, and suffer no other man to call me. But I shall win this time — I am sure I shall, since Clara's fortune depends upon it.'

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CHAPTER XI

Fraternal Love

Nearest of blood should still be next in love ;
And when I see these happy children playing,
While William gathers flowers for Ellen's ringlets,
And Ellen dresses flies for William's angle,
I scarce can think that, in advancing life,
Coldness, unkindness, interest, or suspicion
Will e'er divide that unity so sacred,
Which Nature bound at birth.

Anonymous.

WHEN Mowbray had left his dangerous adviser, in order to steer the course which his agent had indicated without offering to recommend it, he went to the little parlour which his sister was wont to term her own, and in which she spent great part of her time. It was fitted up with a sort of fanciful neatness ; and in its perfect arrangement and good order formed a strong contrast to the other apartments of the old and neglected mansion-house. A number of little articles lay on the work-table, indicating the elegant, and at the same time the unsettled, turn of the inhabitant's mind. There were unfinished drawings, blotted music, needlework of various kinds, and many other little female tasks ; all undertaken with zeal, and so far prosecuted with art and elegance, but all flung aside before any one of them was completed.

Clara herself sat upon a little low couch by the window, reading, or at least turning over the leaves of a book, in which she seemed to read. But instantly starting up when she saw her brother, she ran towards him with the most cordial cheerfulness.

'Welcome—welcome, my dear John ; this is very kind of you to come to visit your recluse sister. I have been trying to nail my eyes and my understanding to a stupid book here, because they say too much thought is not quite good for me.

But either the man's dulness or my want of the power of attending made my eyes pass over the page, just as one seems to read in a dream, without being able to comprehend one word of the matter. You shall talk to me, and that will do better. What can I give you to show that you are welcome? I am afraid tea is all I have to offer, and that you set too little store by.'

'I shall be glad of a cup at present,' said Mowbray, 'for I wish to speak with you.'

'Then Jerry [Martha] shall make it ready instantly,' said Miss Mowbray, ringing and giving orders to her waiting-maid; 'but you must not be ungrateful, John, and plague me with any of the ceremonial for your site — "sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." I will attend, and play my part as prettily as you can desire; but to think of it beforehand would make both my head and my heart ache, and so I beg you will spare me on the subject.'

'Why, you wild kitten,' said Mowbray, 'you turn every day more shy of human communication: we shall have you take the woods one day, and become as savage as the Princess Caraboo. But I will plague you about nothing if I can help it. If matters go not smooth on the great day, they must e'en blame the dull thick head that had no fair lady to help him in his need. But, Clara, I had something more material to say to you — something indeed of the last importance.'

'What is it?' said Clara, in a tone of voice approaching to a scream — 'in the name of God, what is it? You know not how you terrify me!'

'Nay, you start at a shadow, Clara,' answered her brother. 'It is no such uncommon matter neither — good faith, it is the most common distress in the world, so far as I know the world: I am sorely pinched for money.'

'Is that all?' replied Clara, in a tone which seemed to her brother as much to underrate the difficulty when it was explained as her fears had exaggerated it before she heard its nature.

'Is that all?' said he. 'Indeed it is all, and comprehends a great deal of vexation. I shall be hard run unless I can get a certain sum of money; and I must e'en ask you if you can help me?'

'Help you!' replied Clara. - 'Yes, with all my heart, but you know my purse is a light one; more than half of my last dividend is in it, however, and I am sure, John, I shall be

happy if it can serve you, especially as that will at least show that your wants are but small ones.'

'Alas, Clara, if you would help me,' said her brother, half repentant of his purpose, 'you must draw the neck of the goose which lays the golden eggs: you must lend me the whole stock.'

'And why not, John,' said the simple-hearted girl, 'if it will do you a kindness? Are you not my natural guardian? Are you not a kind one? And is not my little fortune entirely at your disposal? You will, I am sure, do all for the best.'

'I fear I may not,' said Mowbray, starting from her, and more distressed by her sudden and unsuspecting compliance than he would have been by difficulties or remonstrance. In the latter case, he would have stifled the pangs of conscience amid the manœuvres which he must have resorted to for obtaining her acquiescence; as matters stood, there was all the difference that there is between slaughtering a tame and unresisting animal and pursuing wild game until the animation of the sportsman's exertions overcomes the internal sense of his own cruelty. The same idea occurred to Mowbray himself.

'By G—,' he said, 'this is like shooting the bird sitting. Clara,' he added, 'I fear this money will scarce be employed as you would wish.'

'Employ it as you yourself please, my dearest brother,' she replied, 'and I will believe it is all for the best.'

'Nay, I am doing for the best,' he replied; 'at least, I am doing what must be done, for I see no other way through it; so all you have to do is to copy this paper, and bid adieu to bank dividends—for a little while at least. I trust soon to double this little matter for you, if Fortune will but stand my friend.'

'Do not trust to Fortune, John,' said Clara, smiling, though with an expression of deep melancholy. 'Alas! she has never been a friend to our family—not at least for many a day.'

'She favours the bold, say my old grammatical exercises,' answered her brother; 'and I must trust her, were she as changeable as a weathercock. And yet—if she should jilt me! What will you do—what will you say, Clara, if I am unable, contrary to my hope, trust, and expectation, to repay you this money within a short time?'

'Do!' replied Clara; 'I must do without it, you know; and for saying, I will not say a word.'

'True,' replied Mowbray, 'but your little expenses — your charities — your halt and blind — your round of paupers?'

'Well, I can manage all that too. Look you here, John, how many half-worked trifles there are. The needle or the pencil is the resource of all distressed heroines, you know; and I promise you, though I have been a little idle and unsettled of late, yet, when I do set about it, no Emmeline or Ethelinde of them all ever sent such loads of trumpery to market as I shall, or made such wealth as I will do. I daresay Lady Penelope, and all the gentry at the Well, will purchase, and will raffle, and do all sorts of things to encourage the pensive performer. I will send them such lots of landscapes with sap-green trees and mazareen-blue rivers, and portraits that will terrify the originals themselves, and handkerchiefs, and turbans, with needlework scalloped exactly like the walks on the Belvidere. Why, I shall become a little fortune in the first season.'

'No, Clara,' said John, gravely, for a virtuous resolution had gained the upper hand in his bosom while his sister ran on in this manner, 'we will do something better than all this. If this kind help of yours does not fetch me through, I am determined I will cut the whole concern. It is but standing a laugh or two, and hearing a gay fellow say, "D—me, Jack, are you turned clodhopper at last?" — that is the worst. Dogs, horses, and all shall go to the hammer; we will keep nothing but your pony, and I will trust to a pair of excellent legs. There is enough left of the old acres to keep us in the way you like best, and that I will learn to like. I will work in the garden, and work in the forest, mark my own trees, and cut them myself, keep my own accounts, and send Saunders Meiklewham to the devil.'

'That last is the best resolution of all, John,' said Clara; 'and if such a day should come round, I should be the happiest of living creatures — I should not have a grief left in the world; if I had, you should never see or hear of it — it should lie here,' she said, pressing her hand on her bosom, 'buried as deep as a funereal urn in a cold sepulchre. Oh! could we not begin such a life to-morrow? If it is absolutely necessary that this trifle of money should be got rid of first, throw it into the river, and think you have lost it amongst gamblers and horse-jockeys.'

Clara's eyes, which she fondly fixed on her brother's face, glowed through the tears which her enthusiasm called into them, while she thus addressed him. Mowbray, on his part, kept his

looks fixed on the ground, with a flush on his cheek that expressed at once false pride and real shame.

At length he looked up. 'My dear girl,' he said, 'how foolishly you talk, and how foolishly I, that have twenty things to do, stand here listening to you! All will go smooth on *my* plan; if it should not, we have yours in reserve, and I swear to you I will adopt it. The trifle which this letter of yours enables me to command may have luck in it, and we must not throw up the cards while we have a chance of the game. Were I to cut from this moment, these few hundreds would make us little better or little worse; so you see we have two strings to our bow. Luck is sometimes against me, that is true; but upon true principle, and playing on the square, I can manage the best of them, or my name is not Mowbray. Adieu, my dearest Clara.' So saying, he kissed her cheek with a more than usual degree of affection.

Ere he could raise himself from his stooping posture, she threw her arm kindly over his neck, and said with a tone of the deepest interest, 'My dearest brother, your slightest wish has been, and ever shall be, a law to me. Oh! if you would but grant me one request in return!'

'What is it, you silly girl?' said Mowbray, gently disengaging himself from her hold. 'What is it you can have to ask that needs such a solemn preface? Remember, I hate prefaces; and when I happen to open a book, always skip them.'

'Without preface, then, my dearest brother, will you, for my sake, avoid those quarrels in which the people yonder are eternally engaged? I never go down there but I hear of some new brawl; and I never lay my head down to sleep but I dream that you are the victim of it. Even last night——'

'Nay, Clara, if you begin to tell your dreams, we shall never have done. Sleeping, to be sure, is the most serious employment of your life, for as to eating, you hardly match a sparrow; but I entreat you to sleep without dreaming, or to keep your visions to yourself. Why do you keep such fast hold of me? What on earth can you be afraid of? Surely you do not think the blockhead Binks, or any other of the good folks below yonder, dared to turn on me? Egad, I wish they would pluck up a little mettle, that I might have an excuse for drilling them. Gad, I would soon teach them to follow at heel.'

'No, John,' replied his sister; 'it is not of such men as these that I have any fear—and yet, cowards are sometimes driven to desperation, and become more dangerous than better men; but it is not such as these that I fear. But there are men in

the world whose qualities are beyond their seeming—whose spirit and courage lie hidden, like metals in the mine, under an unmarked or a plain exterior. You may meet with such; you are rash and headlong, and apt to exercise your wit without always weighing consequences, and thus——’

‘On my word, Clara,’ answered Mowbray, ‘you are in a most sermonising humour this morning; the parson himself could not have been more logical or profound. You have only to divide your discourse into heads, and garnish it with conclusions for use and conclusions for doctrine, and it might be preached before a whole presbytery, with every chance of instruction and edification. But I am a man of the world, my little Clara; and though I wish to go in death’s way as little as possible, I must not fear the raw head and bloody bones neither. And who the devil is to put the question to me? I must know that, Clara, for you have some especial person in your eye when you bid me take care of quarrelling.’

Clara could not become paler than was her usual complexion; but her voice faltered as she eagerly assured her brother that she had no particular person in her thoughts.

‘Clara,’ said her brother, ‘do you remember, when there was a report of a bogle in the upper orchard, when we were both children? Do you remember how you were perpetually telling me to take care of the bogle, and keep away from its haunts? And do you remember my going on purpose to detect the bogle, finding the cow-boy, with a shirt about him, busied in pulling pears, and treating him to a handsome drubbing? I am the same Jack Mowbray still, as ready to face danger and unmask imposition; and your fears, Clara, will only make me watch more closely, till I find out the real object of them. If you warn me of quarrelling with some one, it must be because you know some one who is not unlikely to quarrel with me. You are a flighty and fanciful girl, but you have sense enough not to trouble either yourself or me on a point of honour, save when there is some good reason for it.’

Clara once more protested, and it was with the deepest anxiety to be believed, that what she had said arose only out of the general consequences which she apprehended from the line of conduct her brother had adopted, and which, in her apprehension, was so likely to engage him in the broils that divided the good company at the Spring. Mowbray listened to her explanation with an air of doubt, or rather incredulity, sipped a cup of tea which had for some time been placed before

him, and at length replied, 'Well, Clara, whether I am right or wrong in my guess, it would be cruel to torment you any more, remembering what you have just done for me. But do justice to your brother, and believe that, when you have anything to ask of him, an explicit declaration of your wishes will answer your purpose much better than any ingenious oblique attempts to influence me. Give up all thoughts of such, my dear Clara: you are but a poor manœuvrer, but were you the very Machiavel of your sex, you should not turn the flank of John Mowbray.'

He left the room as he spoke, and did not return, though his sister twice called upon him. It is true that she uttered the word 'brother' so faintly that perhaps the sound did not reach his ears. 'He is gone,' she said, 'and I have had no power to speak out! I am like the wretched creatures who, it is said, lie under a potent charm, that prevents them alike from shedding tears and from confessing their crimes. Yes, there is a spell on this unhappy heart, and either that must be dissolved or this must break.'

CHAPTER XII

The Challenge

A slight note I have about me, for the delivery of which you must excuse me. It is an office which friendship calls upon me to do, and no way offensive to you, as I desire nothing but right on both sides.

King and No King.

THE intelligent reader may recollect that Tyrrel departed from the Fox Hotel on terms not altogether so friendly towards the company as those under which he entered it. Indeed, it occurred to him that he might probably have heard something farther on the subject, though, amidst matters of deeper and more anxious consideration, the idea only passed hastily through his mind; and two days having gone over without any message from Sir Bingo Binks, the whole affair glided entirely out of his memory.

The truth was, that although never old woman took more trouble to collect and blow up with her bellows the embers of her decayed fire, than Captain MacTurk kindly underwent for the purpose of puffing into a flame the dying sparkles of the baronet's courage, yet two days were spent in fruitless conferences before he could attain the desired point. He found Sir Bingo on these different occasions in all sorts of different moods of mind, and disposed to view the thing in all shades of light, except what the captain thought was the true one. He was in a drunken humour—in a sullen humour—in a thoughtless and vilipending humour—in every humour but a fighting one. And when Captain MacTurk talked of the reputation of the company at the Well, Sir Bingo pretended to take offence, said the company might go to the devil, and hinted that he 'did them sufficient honour by gracing them with his countenance, but did not mean to constitute them any judges of his affairs. The fellow was a raff, and he would have nothing to do with him.'

Captain MacTurk would willingly have taken measures against the baronet himself, as in a state of contumacy, but was opposed by Winterblossom and other members of the Committee, who considered Sir Bingo as too important and illustrious a member of their society to be rashly expelled from a place not honoured by the residence of many persons of rank; and finally insisted that nothing should be done in the matter without the advice of Mowbray, whose preparations for his solemn festival on the following Thursday had so much occupied him that he had not lately appeared at the Well.

In the meanwhile, the gallant captain seemed to experience as much distress of mind as if some stain had lain on his own most unblemished of reputations. He went up and down upon the points of his toes, rising up on his instep with a jerk which at once expressed vexation and defiance; he carried his nose turned up in the air, like that of a pig when he snuffs the approaching storm; he spoke in monosyllables when he spoke at all; and — what perhaps illustrated in the strongest manner the depth of his feelings — he refused, in face of the whole company, to pledge Sir Bingo in a glass of the baronet's peculiar cogniac.

At length, the whole Well was alarmed by the report brought by a smart outrider that the young Earl of Etherington, reported to be rising on the horizon of fashion as a star of the first magnitude, intended to pass an hour, or a day, or a week, as it might happen (for his lordship could not be supposed to know his own mind), at St. Ronan's Well.

This suddenly put all in motion. Almanacks were opened to ascertain his lordship's age, inquiries were made concerning the extent of his fortune, his habits were quoted, his tastes were guessed at; and all that the ingenuity of the Managing Committee could devise was resorted to, in order to recommend their Spa to this favourite of fortune. An express was despatched to Shaws Castle with the agreeable intelligence, which fired the train of hope that led to Mowbray's appropriation of his sister's capital. He did not, however, think proper to obey the summons to the Spring; for, not being aware in what light the earl might regard the worthies there assembled, he did not desire to be found by his lordship in any strict connexion with them.

Sir Bingo Binks was in a different situation. The bravery with which he had endured the censure of the place began to give way, when he considered that a person of such distinction as that which public opinion attached to Lord Etherington

should find him bodily indeed at St. Ronan's, but, so far as society was concerned, on the road towards the ancient city of Coventry, and his banishment thither incurred by that most unpardonable offence in modern morality, a solecism in the code of honour. Though sluggish and inert when called to action, the baronet was by no means an absolute coward; or, if so, he was of that class which fights when reduced to extremity. He manfully sent for Captain MacTurk, who waited upon him with a grave solemnity of aspect, which instantly was exchanged for a radiant joy when Sir Bingo, in a few words, empowered him to carry 'a message to that d—d strolling artist, by whom he had been insulted three [two] days since.'

'By Cot,' said the captain, 'my exceedingly goot and excellent friend, and I am happy to do such a favour for you! And it's well you have thought of it yourself; because if it had not been for some of our very goot and excellent friends, that would be putting their spoon into other folks' dish, I should have been asking you a civil question myself, How you came to dine with us, with all that mud and mire which Mr. Tyrrel's grasp has left upon the collar of your coat? — you understand me. But it is much better as it is, and I will go to the man with all the speed of light; and though, to be sure, it should have been sooner thought of, yet let me alone to make an excuse for that, just in my own civil way — better late thrive than never do well, you know, Sir Bingo; and if you have made him wait a little while for his morning, you must give him the better measure, my darling.'

So saying, he awaited no reply, lest peradventure the commission with which he was so hastily and unexpectedly charged should have been clogged with some condition of compromise. No such proposal, however, was made on the part of the doughty Sir Bingo, who eyed his friend as he hastily snatched up his rattan to depart with a dogged look of obstinacy, expressive, to use his own phrase, of a determined resolution to come up to the scratch; and when he heard the captain's parting footsteps, and saw the door shut behind him, he valiantly whistled a few bars of 'Jenny Sutton,' in token he cared not a farthing how the matter was to end.

With a swifter pace than his half-pay leisure usually encouraged, or than his habitual dignity permitted, Captain MacTurk cleared the ground betwixt the Spring and its gay vicinity and the ruins of the Aultoun, where reigned our friend Meg Dods, the sole assertor of its ancient dignities. To

the door of the Cleikum Inn the captain addressed himself, as one too much accustomed to war to fear a rough reception; although at the very first aspect of Meg, who presented her person at the half-opened door, his military experience taught him that his entrance into the place would, in all probability, be disputed.

'Is Mr. Tyrrel at home?' was the question; and the answer was conveyed by the counter-interrogation, 'Wha may ye be that speers?'

As the most polite reply to this question, and an indulgence, at the same time, of his own taciturn disposition, the captain presented to Luckie Dods the fifth part of an ordinary playing card, much grimed with snuff, which bore on its blank side his name and quality.

But Luckie Dods rejected the information thus tendered with contemptuous scorn. 'Nane of your deil's play-books for me,' said she; 'it's an ill world since sic prick-my-dainty doings came in fashion. It's a poor tongue that canna tell its ain name, and I'll hae nane of your scarts upon pasteboard.'

'I am Captain MacTurk of the —— regiment,' said the captain, disdaining further answer.

'MacTurk!' repeated Meg, with an emphasis which induced the owner of the name to reply, 'Yes, honest woman — MacTurk — Hector MacTurk; have you any objections to my name, goodwife?'

'Nae objections have I,' answered Meg; 'it's e'en an excellent name for a heathen. But, Captain MacTurk, since sae it be that ye are a captain, ye may e'en face about and march your ways hame again, to the tune of "Dumbarton Drums"; for ye are ganging to have nae speech of Maister Tirl or ony lodger of mine.'

'And wherefore not?' demanded the veteran; 'and is this of your own foolish head, honest woman, or has your lodger left such orders?'

'Maybe he has and maybe no,' answered Meg, sturdily; 'and I ken nae mair right that ye suld ca' me honest woman than I have to ca' you honest man, whilk is as far frae my thoughts as it wad be from Heaven's truth.'

'The woman is deleerit!' said Captain MacTurk; 'but coom — coom, a gentleman is not to be misused in this way when he comes on a gentleman's business; so make you a bit room on the door-stane, that I may pass by you, or I will make room for myself, by Cot! to your small pleasure.'

And so saying, he assumed the air of a man who was about to make good his passage. But Meg, without deigning farther reply, flourished around her head the hearth-broom, which she had been employing to its more legitimate purpose, when disturbed in her housewifery by Captain MacTurk.

'I ken your errand weel enough, captain, and I ken yoursell. Ye are ane of the folk that gang about yonder setting folk by the lugs, as callants set their collies to fight. But ye sall come to nae lodger o' mine, let abee Maister Tirl, wi' ony sic ungodly errand; for I am ane that will keep God's peace and the king's within my dwelling.'

So saying, and in explicit token of her peaceable intentions, she again flourished her broom.

The veteran instinctively threw himself under St. George's guard, and drew two paces back, exclaiming, 'That the woman was either mad or as drunk as whisky could make her' — an alternative which afforded Meg so little satisfaction, that she fairly rushed on her retiring adversary, and began to use her weapon to fell purpose.

'Me drunk, ye scandalous blackguard! (a blow with the broom interposed as parenthesis) — me, that am fasting from all but sin and bohea!' (another whack).

The captain, swearing, exclaiming, and parrying, caught the blows as they fell, showing much dexterity in single-stick. The people began to gather; and how long his gallantry might have maintained itself against the spirit of self-defence and revenge must be left uncertain, for the arrival of Tyrrel, returned from a short walk, put a period to the contest.

Meg, who had a great respect for her guest, began to feel ashamed of her own violence, and slunk into the house; observing, however, 'that she trowed she had made her hearth-broom and the auld heathen's pow right weel acquainted.' The tranquillity which ensued upon her departure gave Tyrrel an opportunity to ask the captain, whom he at length recognised, the meaning of this singular affray, and whether the visit was intended for him; to which the veteran replied very discomposedly, that 'He should have known that long enough ago, if he had had decent people to open his door and answer a civil question, instead of a flyting madwoman, who was worse than an eagle,' he said, 'or a mastiff-bitch, or a she-bear, or any other female beast in the creation.'

Half-suspecting his errand, and desirous to avoid unnecessary notoriety, Tyrrel, as he showed the captain to the parlour

which he called his own, entreated him to excuse the rudeness of his landlady, and to pass from the topic to that which had procured him the honour of this visit.

'And you are right, my good Master Tyrrel,' said the captain, pulling down the sleeves of his coat, adjusting his handkerchief and breast-ruffle, and endeavouring to recover the composure of manner becoming his mission, but still adverting indignantly to the usage he had received. 'By Cot! if she had but been a man, if it were the king himself—— However, Mr. Tyrrel, I am come on a civil errand—and very civilly I have been treated—the auld bitch should be set in the stocks, and be tanned! My friend, Sir Bingo—— By Cot! I shall never forget that woman's insolence—if there be a constable or a cat-o'-nine-tails within ten miles——'

'I perceive, captain,' said Tyrrel, 'that you are too much disturbed at this moment to enter upon the business which has brought you here; if you will step into my bedroom, and make use of some cold water and a towel, it will give you the time to compose yourself a little.'

'I shall do no such thing, Mr. Tyrrel,' answered the captain, snappishly; 'I do not want to be composed at all, and I do not want to stay in this house a minute longer than to do my errand to you on my friend's behalf. And as for this tanned woman Dods——'

'You will in that case forgive my interrupting you, Captain MacTurk, as I presume your errand to me can have no reference to this strange quarrel with my landlady, with which I have nothing to——'

'And if I thought that it had, sir,' said the captain, interrupting Tyrrel in his turn, 'you should have given me satisfaction before you was a quarter of an hour older. Oh, I would give five pounds to the pretty fellow that would say, "Captain MacTurk, the woman did right"!'

'I certainly will not be that person you wish for, captain,' replied Tyrrel, 'because I really do not know who was in the right or wrong; but I am certainly sorry that you should have met with ill-usage when your purpose was to visit me.'

'Well, sir, if you are concerned,' said the man of peace, snappishly, 'so am I, and there is an end of it. And touching my errand to you—you cannot have forgotten that you treated my friend, Sir Bingo Binks, with singular incivility?'

'I recollect nothing of the kind, captain,' replied Tyrrel. 'I remember that the gentleman, so called, took some uncivil

liberties in laying foolish bets concerning me, and that I treated him, from respect to the rest of the company, and the ladies in particular, with a great degree of moderation and forbearance.'

'And you must have very fine ideas of forbearance,' replied the captain, 'when you took my good friend by the collar of the coat, and lifted him out of your way as if he had been a puppy dog! My good Mr. Tyrrel, I can assure you he does not think that you have forborne him at all, and he has no purpose to forbear you; and I must either carry back a sufficient apology, or you must meet in a quiet way, with a good friend on each side. And this was the errand I came on, when this tanned woman, with the hearth-broom, who is an enemy to all quiet and peaceable proceedings ——'

'We will forget Mrs. Dods for the present, if you please, Captain MacTurk,' said Tyrrel; 'and, to speak to the present subject, you will permit me to say, that I think this summons comes a little of the latest. You know best as a military man, but I have always understood that such differences are usually settled immediately after they occur—not that I intend to baulk Sir Bingo's inclinations upon the score of delay or any other account.'

'I daresay you will not—I daresay you will not, Mr. Tyrrel,' answered the captain—'I am free to think that you know better what belongs to a gentleman. And as to time—look you, my good sir, there are different sorts of people in this world, as there are different sorts of firearms. There are your hair-trigger'd rifles, that go off just at the right moment, and in the twinkling of an eye, and that, Mr. Tyrrel, is your true man of honour; and there is a sort of person that takes a thing up too soon, and sometimes backs out of it, like your rubbishy Birmingham pieces, that will at one time go off at half-cock, and at another time burn priming without going off at all; then again there are pieces that hang fire—or I should rather say, that are like the matchlocks which the black fellows use in the East Indies—there must be some blowing of the match, and so forth, which occasions delay, but the piece carries true enough after all.'

'And your friend Sir Bingo's valour is of this last kind, captain—I presume that is the inference. I should have thought it more like a boy's cannon, which is fired by means of a train, and is but a pop-gun after all.'

'I cannot allow of such comparisons, sir,' said the captain;

'you will understand that I come here as Sir Bingo's friend, and a reflection on him will be an affront to me.'

'I disclaim all intended offence to you, captain; I have no wish to extend the number of my adversaries, or to add to them the name of a gallant officer like yourself,' replied Tyrrel.

'You are too obliging, sir,' said the captain, drawing himself up with dignity. 'By Cot! and that was said very handsomely! Well, sir, and shall I not have the pleasure of carrying back any explanation from you to Sir Bingo? I assure you it would give me pleasure to make this matter handsomely up.'

'To Sir Bingo, Captain MacTurk, I have no apology to offer; I think I treated him more gently than his impertinence deserved.'

'Och, och!' sighed the captain, with a strong Highland intonation; 'then there is no more to be said, but just to settle time and place; for pistols, I suppose, must be the weapons.'

'All these matters are quite the same to me,' said Tyrrel; 'only, in respect of time, I should wish it to be as speedy as possible. What say you to one, afternoon, this very day? You may name the place.'

'At one, afternoon,' replied the captain, deliberately, 'Sir Bingo will attend you; the place may be the Buckstane; for, as the whole company go to the water-side to-day to eat a kettle of fish,¹ there will be no risk of interruption. And who shall I speak to, my good friend, on your side of the quarrel?'

'Really, captain,' replied Tyrrel, 'that is a puzzling question. I have no friend here; I suppose you could hardly act for both?'

'It would be totally, absolutely, and altogether out of the question, my good friend,' replied MacTurk. 'But if you will trust to me, I will bring up a friend on your part from the Well, who, though you have hardly seen him before, will settle matters for you as well as if you had been intimate for twenty years; and I will bring up the doctor, too, if I can get him unloosed from the petticoat of that fat widow Blower that he has strung himself upon.'

'I have no doubt you will do everything with perfect accuracy, captain. At one o'clock, then, we meet at the Buckstane. Stay, permit me to see you to the door.'

'By Cot! and it is not altogether so unnecessary,' said the captain; 'for the tanned woman with the besom might have some advantage in that long dark passage, knowing the ground

¹ See Note G.

better than I do ; tamn her, I will have amends on her, if there be whipping-post, or ducking-stool, or a pair of stocks in the parish !' And so saying, the captain trudged off, his spirits ever and anon agitated by recollection of the causeless aggression of Meg Dods, and again composed to a state of happy serenity by the recollection of the agreeable arrangement which he had made between Mr. Tyrrel and his friend Sir Bingo Binks.

We have heard of men of undoubted benevolence of character and disposition, whose principal delight was to see a miserable criminal, degraded alike by his previous crimes and the sentence which he had incurred, conclude a vicious and wretched life by an ignominious and painful death. It was some such inconsistency of character which induced honest Captain MacTurk, who had really been a meritorious officer, and was a good-natured, honourable, and well-intentioned man, to place his chief delight in setting his friends by the ears, and then acting as umpire in the dangerous rencontres which, according to his code of honour, were absolutely necessary to restore peace and cordiality. We leave the explanation of such anomalies to the labours of craniologists, for they seem to defy all the researches of the ethic philosopher.

CHAPTER XIII

Disappointment

Evans. I pray you now, good Master Slender's serving-man, and friend Simple by your name, which way have you looked for Master Caius?
Slender. Marry, sir, the City-ward, the Park-ward, every way ; Old Windsor way, and every way.

Merry Wives of Windsor.

SIR BINGO BINKS received the captain's communication with the same dogged sullenness he had displayed at sending the challenge ; a most ungracious 'humph,' ascending, as it were, from the very bottom of his stomach, through the folds of a Belcher handkerchief, intimating his acquiescence, in a tone nearly as gracious as that with which the drowsy traveller acknowledges the intimation of the slipshod hostler, that it is on the stroke of five, and the horn will sound in a minute. Captain MacTurk by no means considered this ejaculation as expressing a proper estimate of his own trouble and services. 'Humph !' he replied ; 'and what does that mean, Sir Bingo ? Have not I here had the trouble to put you just into the neat road ; and would you have been able to make a handsome affair out of it at all, after you had let it hang so long in the wind, if I had not taken on myself to make it agreeable to the gentleman, and cooked as neat a mess out of it as I have seen a Frenchman do out of a stale sprat ?'

Sir Bingo saw it was necessary to mutter some intimation of acquiescence and acknowledgment, which, however inarticulate, was sufficient to satisfy the veteran, to whom the adjustment of a personal affair of this kind was a labour of love, and who now, kindly mindful of his promise to Tyrrel, hurried away as if he had been about the most charitable action upon earth, to secure the attendance of some one as a witness on the stranger's part.

Mr. Winterblossom was the person whom MacTurk had in his own mind pitched upon as the fittest person to perform this

act of benevolence, and he lost no time in communicating his wish to that worthy gentleman. But Mr. Winterblossom, though a man of the world, and well enough acquainted with such matters, was by no means so passionately addicted to them as was the Man of Peace, Captain Hector MacTurk. As a *bon vivant*, he hated trouble of any kind, and the shrewd selfishness of his disposition enabled him to foresee that a good deal might accrue to all concerned in the course of this business. He, therefore, coolly replied, that 'He knew nothing of Mr. Tyrrel — not even whether he was a gentleman or not — and besides, he had received no regular application in his behalf; he did not, therefore, feel himself at all inclined to go to the field as his second.' This refusal drove the poor captain to despair. He conjured his friend to be more public-spirited, and entreated him to consider the reputation of the Well, which was to them as a common country, and the honour of the company to which they both belonged, and of which Mr. Winterblossom was in a manner the proper representative, as being, with consent of all, the perpetual president. He reminded him how many quarrels had been nightly undertaken and departed from on the ensuing morning, without any suitable consequences; said, that 'people began to talk of the place oddly; and that, for his own part, he found his own honour so nearly touched, that he had begun to think he himself would be obliged to bring somebody or other to account, for the general credit of the Well; and now, just when the most beautiful occasion had arisen to put everything on a handsome footing, it was hard — it was cruel — it was most unjustifiable — in Mr. Winterblossom to decline so simple a matter as was requested of him.'

Dry and taciturn as the captain was on all ordinary occasions, he proved, on the present, eloquent and almost pathetic; for the tears came into his eyes when he recounted the various quarrels which had become addled, notwithstanding his best endeavours to hatch them into an honourable meeting; and here was one, at length, just chipping the shell, like to be smothered for want of the most ordinary concession on the part of Winterblossom. In short, that gentleman could not hold out any longer. 'It was,' he said, 'a very foolish business, he thought; but to oblige Sir Bingo and Captain MacTurk he had no objection to walk with them about noon as far as the Buckstane, although he must observe the day was hazy, and he had felt a prophetic twinge or two, which looked like a visit of his old acquaintance podagra.'

'Never mind that, my excellent friend,' said the captain, 'a sup out of Sir Bingo's flask is like enough to put that to rights; and, by my soul, it is not the thing he is like to leave behind him on this sort of occasion, unless I be far mistaken in my man.'

'But,' said Winterblossom, 'although I comply with your wishes thus far, Captain MacTurk, I by no means undertake for certain to back this same Master Tyrrel, of whom I know nothing at all, but only agree to go to the place in hopes of preventing mischief.'

'Never fash your beard about that, Mr. Winterblossom,' replied the captain; 'for a little mischief, as you call it, is become a thing absolutely necessary to the credit of the place; and I am sure, whatever be the consequences, they cannot in the present instance be very fatal to anybody; for here is a young fellow that, if he should have a misfortune, nobody will miss, for nobody knows him; then there is Sir Bingo, whom everybody knows so well that they will miss him all the less.'

'And there will be Lady Bingo, a wealthy and handsome young widow,' said Winterblossom, throwing his hat upon his head with the grace and pretension of former days, and sighing to see, as he looked in the mirror, how much time, that had whitened his hair, rounded his stomach, wrinkled his brow, and bent down his shoulders, had disqualified him, as he expressed it, 'for entering for such a plate.'

Secure of Winterblossom, the captain's next anxiety was to obtain the presence of Dr. Quackleben, who, although he wrote himself M.D., did not by any means decline practice as a surgeon, when any job offered for which he was likely to be well paid, as was warranted in the present instance, the wealthy baronet being a party principally concerned. The doctor, therefore, like the eagle scenting the carnage, seized, at the first word, the huge volume of morocco leather which formed his case of portable instruments, and uncoiled before the captain, with ostentatious display, its formidable and glittering contents, upon which he began to lecture as upon a copious and interesting text, until the man of war thought it necessary to give him a word of caution.

'Och,' says he, 'I do pray you, doctor, to carry that packet of yours under the breast of your coat, or in your pocket, or somewhere out of sight, and by no means to produce or open it before the parties. For although scalpels, and tourniquets, and pincers, and the like, are very ingenious implements, and pretty

to behold, and are also useful when time and 'occasion call for them, yet I have known the sight of them take away a man's fighting stomach, and so lose their owner a job, Dr. Quackleben.'

'By my faith, Captain MacTurk,' said the doctor, 'you speak as if you were graduated! I have known these treacherous articles play their master many a cursed trick. The very sight of my forceps, without the least effort on my part, once cured an inveterate toothache of three days' duration, prevented the extraction of a carious molendinar, which it was the very end of their formation to achieve, and sent me home minus a guinea. But hand me that great-coat, captain, and we will place the instruments in ambuscade, until they are called into action in due time. I should think something will happen: Sir Bingo is a sure shot at a moor-cock.'

'Cannot say,' replied MacTurk; 'I have known the pistol shake many a hand that held the fowling-piece fast enough. Yonder Tyrrel looks like a teevilish cool customer: I watched him the whole time I was delivering my errand, and I can promise you he is mettle to the backbone.'

'Well, I will have my bandages ready *secundum artem*,' replied the Man of Medicine. 'We must guard against hæmorrhage—Sir Bingo is a plethoric subject. One o'clock, you say—at the Buckstane; I will be punctual.'

'Will you not walk with us?' said Captain MacTurk, who seemed willing to keep his whole convoy together on this occasion, lest, peradventure, any of them had fled from under his patronage.

'No,' replied the doctor, 'I must first make an apology to worthy Mrs. Blower, for I had promised her my arm down to the river-side, where they are all to eat a kettle of fish.'

'By Cot! and I hope we shall make them a prettier kettle of fish than was ever seen at St. Ronan's,' said the captain, rubbing his hands.

'Don't say *we*, captain,' replied the cautious doctor; 'I for one have nothing to do with the meeting—wash my hands of it. No—no, I cannot afford to be clapt up as accessory. You ask me to meet you at the Buckstane—no purpose assigned; I am willing to oblige my worthy friend, Captain MacTurk—walk that way, thinking of nothing particular—hear the report of pistols—hasten to the spot—fortunately just in time to prevent the most fatal consequences—chance most opportunely to have my case of instruments with me—indeed, generally walk

with them about me — *nunquam non paratus* — then give my professional definition of the wound and state of the patient. That is the way to give evidence, captain, before sheriffs, coroners, and such sort of folk — never commit one's self — it is a rule of our profession.'

'Well — well, doctor,' answered the captain, 'you know your own ways best; and so you are but there to give a chance of help in case of accident, all the laws of honour will be fully complied with. But it would be a foul reflection upon me, as a man of honour, if I did not take care that there should be somebody to come in thirdsman between death and my principal.'

At the awful hour of one, afternoon, there arrived upon the appointed spot Captain MacTurk, leading to the field the valourous Sir Bingo, not exactly straining like a greyhound in the slips, but rather looking moody like a butcher's bull-dog, which knows he must fight since his master bids him. Yet the baronet showed no outward flinching or abatement of courage, excepting that the tune of 'Jenny Sutton,' which he had whistled without intermission since he left the hotel, had, during the last half mile of their walk, sunk into silence; although, to look at the muscles of the mouth, projection of the lip, and vacancy of the eye, it seemed as if the notes were still passing through his mind, and that he whistled 'Jenny Sutton' in his imagination. Mr. Winterblossom came two minutes after this happy pair, and the doctor was equally punctual.

'Upon my soul,' said the former, 'this is a mighty silly affair, Sir Bingo, and might, I think, be easily taken up at less risk to all parties than a meeting of this kind. You should recollect, Sir Bingo, that you have much depending upon your life: you are a married man, Sir Bingo.'

Sir Bingo turned the quid in his mouth and squirted out the juice in a most coachman-like manner.

'Mr. Winterblossom,' said the captain, 'Sir Bingo has in this matter put himself in my hands, and unless you think yourself more able to direct his course than I am, I must frankly tell you that I will be disoblged by your interference. You may speak to your own friend as much as you please; and if you find yourself authorised to make any proposal, I shall be desirous to lend an ear to it on the part of my worthy principal, Sir Bingo. But I will be plain with you, that I do not greatly approve of settlements upon the field, though I hope I am a quiet and peaceable man. Yet here is our honour to be looked

after in the first place ; and, moreover, I must insist that every proposal for accommodation shall originate with your party or yourself.'

'*My party!*' answered Winterblossom ; 'why, really, though I came hither at your request, Captain MacTurk, yet I must see more of the matter ere I can fairly pronounce myself second to a man I never saw but once.'

'And, perhaps, may never see again,' said the doctor, looking at his watch ; 'for it is ten minutes past the hour, and here is no Mr. Tyrrel.'

'Hey! what's that you say, doctor?' said the baronet, awakened from his apathy.

'He speaks tamned nonsense,' said the captain, pulling out a huge, old-fashioned, turnip-shaped implement, with a blackened silver dial-plate. 'It is not above three minutes after one by the true time, and I will uphold Mr. Tyrrel to be a man of his word — never saw a man take a thing more coolly.'

'Not more coolly than he takes his walk this way,' said the doctor, 'for the hour is as I tell you ; remember, I am professional — have pulses to count by the second and half-second — my timepiece must go as true as the sun.'

'And I have mounted guard a thousand times by my watch,' said the captain ; 'and I defy the devil to say that Hector MacTurk did not always discharge his duty to the twentieth part of the fraction of a second ; it was my great-grandmother Lady Killbracklin's, and I will maintain its reputation against any timepiece that ever went upon wheels.'

'Well, then, look at your own watch, captain,' said Winterblossom, 'for time stands still with no man, and while we speak the hour advances. On my word, I think this Mr. Tyrrel intends to humbug us.'

'Hey! what's that you say?' said Sir Bingo, once more starting from his sullen reverie.

'I shall not look at my watch upon no such matter,' said the captain ; 'nor will I any way be disposed to doubt your friend's honour, Mr. Winterblossom.'

'*My friend!*' said Mr. Winterblossom ; 'I must tell you once more, captain, that this Mr. Tyrrel is no friend of mine — none in the world. He is your friend, Captain MacTurk ; and I own, if he keeps us waiting much longer on this occasion, I will be apt to consider his friendship as of very little value.'

'And how dare you, then, say that the man is my friend?' said the captain, knitting his brows in a most formidable manner.

'Pooh ! pooh ! captain,' answered Winterblossom, coolly, if not contemptuously, 'keep all that for silly boys ; I have lived in the world too long either to provoke quarrels or to care about them. So, reserve your fire, it is all thrown away on such an old cock as I am. But I really wish we knew whether this fellow means to come ; twenty minutes past the hour — I think it is odds that you are bilked, Sir Bingo ?'

'Bilked ! hey !' cried Sir Bingo ; 'by Gad, I always thought so — I wagered with Mowbray he was a raff — I am had, by Gad ! I'll wait no longer than the half hour, by Gad, were he a field-marshal.'

'You will be directed in that matter by your friend, if you please, Sir Bingo,' said the captain.

'D— me if I will,' returned the baronet. 'Friend ! a pretty friend, to bring me out here on such a fool's errand ! I knew the fellow was a raff ; but I never thought you, with all your chaff about honour, such a d—d spoon as to bring a message from a fellow who has fled the pit !'

'If you regret so much having come here to no purpose,' said the captain, in a very lofty tone, 'and if you think I have used you like a spoon, as you say, I will have no objection in life to take Mr. Tyrrel's place and serve your occasion, my boy !'

'By—— ! and if you like it, you may fire away, and welcome,' said Sir Bingo ; 'and I'll spin a crown for first shot, for I do not understand being brought here for nothing, d— me !'

'And there was never man alive so ready as I am to give you something to stay your stomach,' said the irritable Highlander.

'Oh fie, gentlemen ! fie — fie — fie !' exclaimed the pacific Mr. Winterblossom. 'For shame, captain ! Out upon you, Sir Bingo, are you mad ? What, principal and second ! the like was never heard of — never.'

The parties were in some degree recalled to their more cool recollections by this expostulation, yet continued a short quarter-deck walk to and fro, upon parallel lines, looking at each other sullenly as they passed, and bristling like two dogs who have a mind to quarrel, yet hesitate to commence hostilities. During this promenade, also, the perpendicular and erect carriage of the veteran, rising on his toes at every step, formed a whimsical contrast with the heavy, loutish shuffle of the bulky baronet, who had, by dint of practise, very nearly attained that most enviable of all carriages, the gait of a shambling Yorkshire hostler. His coarse spirit was now thoroughly

kindled, and like iron, or any other baser metal, which is slow in receiving heat, it retained long the smouldering and angry spirit of resentment that had originally brought him to the place, and now rendered him willing to wreak his uncomfortable feelings upon the nearest object which occurred, since the first purpose of his coming thither was frustrated. In his own phrase, his pluck was up, and finding himself in a fighting humour, he thought it a pity, like Bob Acres, that so much good courage should be thrown away. As, however, that courage after all consisted chiefly in ill-humour; and as, in the demeanour of the captain, he read nothing deferential or deprecatory of his wrath, he began to listen with more attention to the arguments of Mr. Winterblossom, who entreated them not to sully, by private quarrel, the honour they had that day so happily acquired without either blood or risk.

'It was now,' he said, 'three-quarters of an hour past the time appointed for this person, who calls himself Tyrrel, to meet Sir Bingo Binks. Now, instead of standing squabbling here, which serves no purpose, I propose we should reduce to writing the circumstances which attend this affair, for the satisfaction of the company at the Well, and that the memorandum shall be regularly attested by our subscriptions; after which, I shall farther humbly propose that it be subjected to the revision of the Committee of Management.'

'I object to any revision of a statement to which my name shall be appended,' said the captain.

'Right — very true, captain,' said the complaisant Mr. Winterblossom; 'undoubtedly you know best, and your signature is completely sufficient to authenticate this transaction; however, as it is the most important which has occurred since the Spring was established, I propose we shall all sign the *procès-verbal*, as I may term it.'

'Leave me out, if you please,' said the doctor, not much satisfied that both the original quarrel and the bye-battle had passed over without any occasion for the offices of a Machaon — 'leave me out, if you please; for it does not become me to be ostensibly concerned in any proceedings which have had for their object a breach of the peace. And for the importance of waiting here for an hour in a fine afternoon, it is my opinion there was a more important service done to the Well of St. Ronan's when I, Quentin Quackleben, M.D., cured Lady Penelope Penfeather of her seventh attack upon the nerves, attended with febrile symptoms.'

'No disparagement to your skill at all, doctor, said Mr. Winterblossom; 'but I conceive the lesson which this fellow has received will be a great means to prevent improper persons from appearing at the Spring hereafter; and, for my part, I shall move that no one be invited to dine at the table in future till his name is regularly entered as a member of the company in the lists at the public room. And I hope both Sir Bingo and the captain will receive the thanks of the company for their spirited conduct in expelling the intruder. Sir Bingo, will you allow me to apply to your flask — a little twinge I feel, owing to the dampness of the grass.'

Sir Bingo, soothed by the consequence he had acquired, readily imparted to the invalid a thimbleful of his cordial, which, we believe, had been prepared by some cunning chemist in the wilds of Glenlivat. He then filled a bumper and extended it towards the veteran, as an unequivocal symptom of reconciliation. The real turbinacious flavour no sooner reached the nose of the captain than the beverage was turned down his throat with symptoms of most unequivocal applause.

'I shall have some hope of the young fellows of this day,' he said, 'now that they begin to give up their Dutch and French distilled waters, and stick to genuine Highland ware. By Cot, it is the only liquor fit for a gentleman to drink in a morning, if he can have the good fortune to come by it, you see.'

'Or after dinner either, captain,' said the doctor, to whom the glass had passed in rotation; 'it is worth all the wines in France for flavour, and more cordial to the system besides.'

'And now,' said the captain, 'that we may not go off the ground with anything on our stomachs worse than the whisky, I can afford to say — as Captain Hector MacTurk's character is tolerably well established — that I am sorry for the little difference that has occurred betwixt me and my worthy friend, Sir Bingo, here.'

'And since you are so civil, captain,' said Sir Bingo, 'why, I am sorry too, only it would put the devil out of temper to lose so fine a fishing-day — wind south, fine air on the pool, water settled from the flood, just in trim, and I dare say three pairs of hooks have passed over my cast before this time!'

He closed this elaborate lamentation with a libation of the same cordial which he had imparted to his companions; and they returned in a body to the hotel, where the transactions of the morning were soon afterwards announced to the company by the following program: —

STATEMENT

'Sir Bingo Binks, baronet, having found himself aggrieved by the uncivil behaviour of an individual calling himself Francis Tyrrel, now or lately a resident at the Cleikum Inn, Aultoun of St. Ronan's, and having empowered Captain Hector MacTurk to wait upon the said Mr. Tyrrel to demand an apology, under the alternative of personal satisfaction, according to the laws of honour and the practice of gentlemen, the said Tyrrel voluntarily engaged to meet the said Sir Bingo Binks, baronet, at the Buckstane, near St. Ronan's Burn, upon this present day, being Wednesday — August. In consequence of which appointment, we, the undersigned, did attend at the place named, from one o'clock till two, without seeing or hearing anything whatever of the said Francis Tyrrel, or any one in his behalf; which fact we make thus publicly known, that all men, and particularly the distinguished company assembled at the Fox Hotel, may be duly apprised of the character and behaviour of the said Francis Tyrrel, in case of his again presuming to intrude himself into the society of persons of honour.

'The Fox Inn and Hotel, St. Ronan's Well, August 18—.

(Signed) 'BINGO BINKS.

'HECTOR MAC TURK.

'PHILIP WINTERBLOSSOM.'

A little lower followed this separate attestation :—

'I, Quentin Quackleben, M.D., F.R.S., D.E., B.L., X.Z., etc. etc., being called upon to attest what I know in the said matter, do hereby verify that, being by accident at the Buckstane, near St. Ronan's Burn, on this present day, at the hour of one, afternoon, and chancing to remain there for the space of nearly an hour, conversing with Sir Bingo Binks, Captain MacTurk, and Mr. Winterblossom, we did not, during that time, see or hear anything of or from the person calling himself Francis Tyrrel, whose presence at that place seemed to be expected by the gentlemen I have just named.' This *affiche* was dated like the former, and certified under the august hand of Quentin Quackleben, M.D., etc. etc. etc.

Again, and prefaced by the averment that an improper person had been lately introduced into the company of St. Ronan's Well, there came forth a legislative enactment, on the part of the Committee, declaring 'That no one shall in future be invited to the dinners, or balls, or other entertainments of

In such a town, it usually happens that the sheriff-clerk, especially supposing him agent for several lairds of the higher order, is possessed of one of the best-looking houses ; and such was that of Mr. Bindloose. None of the smartness of the brick-built and brass-hammered mansion of a southern attorney appeared indeed in this mansion, which was a tall, thin, grim-looking building, in the centre of the town, with narrow windows and projecting gables, notched into that sort of descent called crow-steps, and having the lower casements defended by stancheons of iron ; for Mr. Bindloose, as frequently happens, kept a branch of one of the two national banks, which had been lately established in the town of Marchthorn.

Towards the door of this tenement there advanced slowly up the ancient, but empty, streets of this famous borough a vehicle which, had it appeared in Piccadilly, would have furnished unremitted laughter for a week and conversation for a twelvemonth. It was a two-wheeled vehicle, which claimed none of the modern appellations of tilbury, tandem, dennet, or the like ; but aspired only to the humble name of that almost forgotten accommodation, a whiskey, or, according to some authorities, a tim-whiskey. Green was, or had been, its original colour, and it was placed sturdily and safely low upon its little old-fashioned wheels, which bore much less than the usual proportion to the size of the carriage which they sustained. It had a calash head, which had been pulled up, in consideration either to the dampness of the morning air or to the retiring delicacy of the fair form which, shrouded by leathern curtains, tenanted this venerable specimen of antediluvian coach-building.

But, as this fair and modest dame noway aspired to the skill of a charioteer, the management of a horse which seemed as old as the carriage he drew was in the exclusive charge of an old fellow in a postilion's jacket, whose grey hairs escaped on each side of an old-fashioned velvet jockey-cap, and whose left shoulder was so considerably elevated above his head, that it seemed as if, with little effort, his neck might have been tucked under his arm, like that of a roasted grouse-cock. This gallant equerry was mounted on a steed as old as that which toiled betwixt the shafts of the carriage, and which he guided by a leading rein. Goadng one animal with his single spur, and stimulating the other with his whip, he effected a reasonable trot upon the causeway, which only terminated when the whiskey stopped at Mr. Bindloose's door — an event of importance enough to excite the curiosity of the inhabitants of that and

CHAPTER XIV

The Consultation

Clown. I hope here be proofs.

Measure for Measure.

THE borough of — lies, as all the world knows, about fourteen miles distant from St. Ronan's, being the county town of that shire, which, as described in the Tourist's Guide, numbers among its objects of interest that gay and popular watering-place, whose fame, no doubt, will be greatly enhanced by the present annals of its earlier history. As it is at present unnecessary to be more particular concerning the scene of our story, we will fill up the blank left in the first name with the fictitious appellation of Marchthorn, having often found ourselves embarrassed in the course of a story by the occurrence of an ugly hiatus, which we cannot always at first sight fill up with the proper reference to the rest of the narrative.

Marchthorn, then, was an old-fashioned Scottish town, the street of which, on market-day, showed a reasonable number of stout great-coated yeomen, bartering or dealing for the various commodities of their farms; and on other days of the week only a few forlorn burghers, crawling about like half-awakened flies, and watching the town steeple till the happy sound of twelve strokes from Time's oracle should tell them it was time to take their meridian dram. The narrow windows of the shops intimated very imperfectly the miscellaneous contents of the interior, where every merchant, as the shopkeepers of Marchthorn were termed, *more Scotico*, sold everything that could be thought of. As for manufactures, there were none, except that of the careful town-council, who were mightily busied in preparing the warp and woof which, at the end of every five or six years, the town of Marchthorn contributed for the purpose of weaving the fourth or fifth part of a member of Parliament.

the neighbouring houses. Wheels were laid aside, needles left sticking in the half-finished seams, and many a nose, spectacled and unspectacled, was popped out of the adjoining windows, which had the good fortune to command a view of Mr. Bindloose's front door. The faces of two or three giggling clerks were visible at the barred casements of which we have spoken, much amused at the descent of an old lady from this respectable carriage, whose dress and appearance might possibly have been fashionable at the time when her equipage was new. A satin cardinal, lined with grey squirrels' skin, and a black silk bonnet, trimmed with crape, were garments which did not now excite the respect which in their fresher days they had doubtless commanded. But there was that in the features of the wearer which would have commanded Mr. Bindloose's best regard though it had appeared in far worse attire; for he beheld the face of an ancient customer, who had always paid her law expenses with the ready penny, and whose account with the bank was balanced by a very respectable sum at her credit. It was, indeed, no other than our respected friend, Mrs. Dods of the Cleikum Inn, St. Ronan's, Aultoun.

Now her arrival intimated matter of deep import. Meg was a person of all others most averse to leave her home, where, in her own opinion at least, nothing went on well without her immediate superintendence. Limited, therefore, as was her sphere, she remained fixed in the centre thereof; and few as were her satellites, they were under the necessity of performing their revolutions around her, while she herself continued stationary. Saturn, in fact, would be scarce more surprised at a passing call from the Sun than Mr. Bindloose at this unexpected visit of his old client. In one breath he rebuked the inquisitive impertinence of his clerks, in another stimulated his housekeeper, old Hannah — for Mr. Bindloose was a bluff bachelor — to get tea ready in the green parlour; and while yet speaking, was at the side of the whiskey, unclasping the curtains, rolling down the apron, and assisting his old friend to dismount.

'The jappanned tea-caddie, Hannah — the best bohea — bid Tib kindle a spark of fire — the morning's damp. Draw in the giggling faces of ye, ye d—d idle scoundrels, or laugh at your ain toom pouches; it will be lang or your weel-doing fill them.' This was spoken, as the honest lawyer himself might have said, *in transitu*, the rest by the side of the carriage. 'My stars, Mrs. Dods, and is this really your ain sell, *in propriâ personâ*? Wha lookit for you at such a time of day? Anthony, how's

a' wi' ye, Anthony ? So ye hae ta'en the road again, Anthony ; help us down wi' the apron, Anthony — that will do. Lean on me, Mrs. Dods — help your mistress, Anthony ; put the horses in my stable, the lads will give you the key. Come away, Mrs. Dods ; I am blythe to see you straight your legs on the causeway of our auld borough again ; come in-bye, and we'll see to get you some breakfast, for ye hae been asteer early this morning.'

'I am a sair trouble to you, Mr. Bindloose,' said the old lady, accepting the offer of his arm, and accompanying him into the house — 'I am e'en a sair trouble to you, but I could not rest till I had your advice on something of moment.'

'Happy will I be to serve you, my gude auld acquaintance,' said the clerk ; 'but sit you down — sit you down — sit you down, Mrs. Dods ; meat and mess never hindered wark. Ye are something overcome wi' your travel : the spirit canna aye bear through the flesh, Mrs. Dods ; ye should remember that your life is a precious one, and ye should take care of your health, Mrs. Dods.'

'My life precious !' exclaimed Meg Dods. 'Nane o' your whullywhaing, Mr. Bindloose. Deil ane wad miss the auld girning alewife, Mr. Bindloose, unless it were here and there a puir body, and maybe the auld house-tyke, that wadna be sae weel guided, puir fallow.'

'Fie — fie ! Mrs. Dods,' said the clerk, in a tone of friendly rebuke ; 'it vexes an auld friend to hear ye speak of yourself in that disrespectful sort of a way ; and, as for quitting us, I bless God I have not seen you look better this half-score of years. But maybe you will be thinking of setting your house in order, which is the act of a carefu' and of a Christian woman. O ! it's an awfu' thing to die intestate, if we had grace to consider it.'

'Aweel, I daur say I'll consider that some day soon, Mr. Bindloose ; but that's no my present errand.'

'Be it what it like, Mrs. Dods, ye are right heartily welcome here, and we have a' the day to speak of the business in hand : *festina lente*, that is the true law language — hooly and fairly, as one may say — ill treating of business with an empty stomach ; and here comes your tea, and I hope Hannah has made it to your taste.'

Meg sipped her tea — confessed Hannah's skill in the mysteries of the Chinese herb — sipped again, then tried to eat a bit of bread and butter, with very indifferent success ; and

notwithstanding the lawyer's compliments to her good looks, seemed, in reality, on the point of becoming ill.

'In the deil's name, what is the matter?' said the lawyer, too well read in a profession where sharp observation is peculiarly necessary to suffer these symptoms of agitation to escape him. 'Ay, dame, ye are taking this business of yours deeper to heart than ever I kenn'd you take onything. Ony o' your banded debtors failed, or like to fail? What then! cheer ye up; you can afford a little loss, and it canna be ony great matter, or I would doubtless have heard of it.'

'In troth, but it is a loss, Mr. Bindloose; and what say ye to the loss of a friend?'

This was a possibility which had never entered the lawyer's long list of calamities, and he was at some loss to conceive what the old lady could possibly mean by so sentimental a pro-lusion. But just as he began to come out with his 'Ay—ay, we are all mortal, *Vita incerta, mors certissima!*' and two or three more pithy reflections, which he was in the habit of uttering after funerals, when the will of the deceased was about to be opened—just then Mrs. Dods was pleased to become the expounder of her own oracle.

'I see how it is, Mr. Bindloose,' she said; 'I maun tell my ain ailment, for you are no likely to guess it; and so, if ye will shut the door, and see that nane of your giggling callants are listening in the passage, I will e'en tell you how things stand with me.'

Mr. Bindloose hastily arose to obey her commands, gave a cautionary glance into the bank-office, and saw that his idle apprentices were fast at their desks, turned the key upon them, as if it were in a fit of absence, and then returned, not a little curious to know what could be the matter with his old friend; and leaving off all further attempts to put cases, quietly drew his chair near hers, and awaited her own time to make her communication.

'Mr. Bindloose,' said she, 'I am no sure that you may mind, about six or seven years ago, that there were twa daft English callants, lodgers of mine, that had some trouble from auld St. Ronan's about shooting on the Springwell Head muirs.'

'I mind it as weel as yesterday, mistress,' said the clerk; 'by the same token, you gave me a note for my trouble—which wasna worth speaking about—and bade me no bring in a bill against the puir bairns; ye had aye a kind heart, Mrs. Dods.'

'Maybe, and maybe no, Mr. Bindloose; that is just as I find folk. But concerning these lads, they baith left the country, and, as I think, in some ill bluid wi' ane another, and now the auldest and the doucest of the twa came back again about a fortnight sin' syne, and has been my guest ever since.'

'Aweel, and I trust he is not at his auld tricks again, good-wife?' answered the clerk. 'I havena sae muckle to say either wi' the new sheriff or the bench of justices as I used to hae, Mrs. Dods; and the procurator-fiscal is very severe on poaching, being borne out by the new association: few of our auld friends of the Killnakelty are able to come to the sessions now, Mrs. Dods.'

'The waur for the country, Mr. Bindloose,' replied the old lady; 'they were decent, considerate men, that didna plague a puir herd callant muckle about a moorfowl or a mawkin, unless he turned common fowler. Sir Robert Ringhorse used to say, the herd lads shot as mony gleds and pyots as they did game. But new lords, new laws — naething but fine and imprisonment, and the game no a feather the plentier. If I wad hae a brace or twa of birds in the house, as everybody looks for them after the twelfth, I ken what they are like to cost me. And what for no? risk maun be paid for. There is John Pirner himsell, that has keepit the muir-side thirty year in spite of a' the lairds in the country, shoots, he tells me, nowadays, as if he felt a rape about his neck.'

'It wasna about ony game business, then, that you wanted advice?' said Bindloose, who, though somewhat of a digresser himself, made little allowance for the excursions of others from the subject in hand.

'Indeed is it no, Mr. Bindloose,' said Meg; 'but it is e'en about this unhappy callant that I spoke to you about. Ye maun ken I have cleiket a particular fancy to this lad, Francis Tirl — a fancy that whiles surprises my very sell, Mr. Bindloose, only that there is nae sin in it.'

'None — none in the world, Mrs. Dods,' said the lawyer, thinking at the same time within his own mind, 'Oho! the mist begins to clear up: the young poacher has hit the mark, I see — winged the old barren grey hen — ay, ay, a marriage-contract, no doubt; but I maun gie her line. Ye are a wise woman, Mrs. Dods,' he continued aloud, 'and can doubtless consider the chances and the changes of human affairs.'

'But I could never have considered what has befallen this puir lad, Mr. Bindloose,' said Mrs. Dods, 'through the malice

of wicked men. He lived, then, at the Cleikum, as I tell you, for mair than a fortnight, as quiet as a lamb on a lea-rig — a decenter lad never came within my door; ate and drank enough for the gude of the house, and nae mair than was for his ain gude, whether of body or soul; cleared his bills ilka Saturday at e'en, as regularly as Saturday came round.'

'An admirable customer, no doubt, Mrs. Dods,' said the lawyer.

'Never was the like of him for that matter,' answered the honest dame. 'But to see the malice of men! Some of thae landloupers and gill-flirts down at the filthy puddle yonder, that they ca' the Waal, had heard of this puir lad, and the bits of pictures that he made fashion of drawing, and they maun cuittle him awa' doun to the hottle, where mony a bonny story they had clecked, Mr. Bindloose, baith of Mr. Tirl and of myself.'

'A commissary court business,' said the writer, going off again upon a false scent. 'I shall trim their jackets for them, Mrs. Dods, if you can but bring tight evidence of the facts: I will soon bring them to fine and palinode — I will make them repent meddling with your good name.'

'My gude name! What the sorrow is the matter wi' my name, Mr. Bindloose?' said the irritable client. 'I think ye hae been at the wee cappie this morning, for as early as it is. My gude name! if onybody touched my gude name, I would neither fash counsel nor commissary — I wad be down amang them like a jer-falcon amang a when wild geese, and the best amang them that dared to say onything of Meg Dods by what was honest and civil, I wad sune see if her cockernonie was made of her ain hair or other folks'. *My gude name, indeed!*'

'Weel — weel, Mrs. Dods, I was mista'en, that's a', said the writer — 'I was mista'en; and I dare to say you would haud your ain wi' your neighbours as weel as ony woman in the land. But let us hear now what the grief is, in one word.'

'In one word, then, Clerk Bindloose, it is little short of — murder,' said Meg in a low tone, as if the very utterance of the word startled her.

'Murder! — murder, Mrs. Dods! It cannot be — there is not a word of it in the sheriff-office — the procurator-fiscal kens nothing of it; there could not be murder in the country, and me not hear of it; for God's sake, take heed what you say, woman, and dinna get yourself into trouble.'

'Mr. Bindloose, I can but speak according to my lights.'

said Mrs. Dods ; ' you are in a sense a judge in Israel — at least you are one of the scribes having authority — and I tell you, with a wae and bitter heart, that this puir callant of mine that was lodging in my house has been murdered or kidnapped awa' amang thae banditti folk down at the New Waal ; and I'll have the law put in force against them, if it should cost me a hundred pounds.'

The clerk stood much astonished at the nature of Meg's accusation, and the pertinacity with which she seemed disposed to insist upon it.

' I have this comfort,' she continued, ' that whatever has happened, it has been by no fault of mine, Mr. Bindloose ; for weel I wot, before that bloodthirsty auld half-pay Philistine, MacTurk, got to speech of him, I clawed his cantle to some purpose with my hearth-besom. But the poor simple bairn himsell, that had nae mair knowledge of the wickedness of human nature than a calf has of a flesher's gully, he threepit to see the auld hardened bloodshedder, and trysted wi' him to meet wi' some of the gang at an hour certain that same day, and awa' he gaed to keep tryst, but since that hour naeboddy ever has set een on him. And the mansworn villains now want to put a disgrace on him, and say that he fled the country rather than face them ! A likely story — fled the country for them ! — and leave his bill unsettled — him that was sae regular — and his portmantle and his fishing-rod, and the pencils and pictures he held sic a wark about ! It's my faithful belief, Mr. Bindloose — and ye may trust me or no as ye like — that he had some foul play between the Cleikum and the Buckstane. I have thought it, and I have dreamed it, and I will be at the bottom of it, or my name is not Meg Dods, and that I wad have them a' to reckon on. Ay — ay, that's right, Mr. Bindloose, tak out your pen and inkhorn, and let us set about it to purpose.'

With considerable difficulty, and at the expense of much cross-examination, Mr. Bindloose extracted from his client a detailed account of the proceedings of the company at the Well towards Tyrrel, so far as they were known to, or suspected by, Meg, making notes, as the examination proceeded, of what appeared to be matter of consequence. After a moment's consideration, he asked the dame the very natural question, how she came to be acquainted with the material fact that a hostile appointment was made between Captain MacTurk and her lodger, when, according to her own account, it was made *intra parietes* and *remotis testibus*.

'Ay, but we victuallers ken weel eneugh what goes on in our ain houses,' said Meg. 'And what for no? If ye *maun* ken a' about it, I e'en listened through the keyhole of the door.'

'And do you say you heard them settle an appointment for a duel?' said the clerk; 'and did you no take ony measures to hinder mischief, Mrs. Dods, having such a respect for this lad as you say you have, Mrs. Dods? I really wadna have looked for the like o' this at your hands.'

'In truth, Mr. Bindloose,' said Meg, putting her apron to her eyes, 'and that's what vexes me mair than a' the rest, and ye needna say muckle to ane whose heart is e'en the sairer that she has been a thought to blame. But there has been mony a challenge, as they ca' it, passed in my house when thae daft lads of the Wildfire Club and the Helter Skelter were upon their rambles; and they had aye sense eneugh to make it up without fighting, sae that I really did not apprehend onything like mischief. And ye maun think, moreover, Mr. Bindloose, that it would have been an unco thing if a guest, in a decent and creditable public like mine, was to have cried coward before ony of thae landlouping blackguards that live down at the hottle yonder.'

'That is to say, Mrs. Dods, you were desirous your guest should fight for the honour of your house,' said Bindloose.

'What for no, Mr. Bindloose? Isna that kind of fray aye about honour? and what for should the honour of a substantial, four-nooked, slated house of three stories no be foughten for as weel as the credit of ony of these feckless callants that make such a fray about their reputation? I promise you my house, the Cleikum, stood in the Auld Town of St. Ronan's before they were born, and it will stand there after they are hanged, as I trust some of them are like to be.'

'Well, but perhaps your lodger had less zeal for the honour of the house, and has quietly taken himself out of harm's way,' said Mr. Bindloose; 'for, if I understand your story, this meeting never took place.'

'Have less zeal!' said Meg, determined to be pleased with no supposition of her lawyer. 'Mr. Bindloose, ye little ken him. I wish ye had seen him when he was angry! I dared hardly face him mysell, and there are no mony folk that I am feared for. Meeting! there was nae meeting, I trow; they never dared to meet him fairly. But I am sure waur came of it than ever would have come of a meeting; for Anthony heard

two shots gang off as he was watering the auld naig down at the burn, and that is not far frae the footpath that leads to the Buckstane. I was angry at him for no making on to see what the matter was, but he thought it was auld Pirner out wi' the double-barrel, and he wasna keen of making himself a witness, in case he suld have been ca'd on in the Poaching Court.'

'Well,' said the sheriff-clerk, 'and I daresay he did hear a poacher fire a couple of shots — nothing more likely. Believe me, Mrs. Dods, your guest had no fancy for the party Captain MacTurk invited him to; and being a quiet sort of man, he has just walked away to his own home, if he has one. I am really sorry you have given yourself the trouble of this long journey about so simple a matter.'

Mrs. Dods remained with her eyes fixed on the ground in a very sullen and discontented posture, and when she spoke it was in a tone of corresponding displeasure.

'Aweel — aweel, live and learn, they say. I thought I had a friend in you, Mr. Bindloose. I am sure I aye took your part when folk misca'd ye, and said ye were this, that, and the other thing, and little better than an auld sneck-drawing loon, Mr. Bindloose. And ye have aye keepit my penny of money, though, nae doubt, Tam Turnpenny lives nearer me, and they say he allows half a per cent mair than ye do if the siller lies, and mine is but seldom steered.'

'But ye have not the bank's security, madam,' said Mr. Bindloose, reddening. 'I say harm of nae man's credit — ill would it beseem me — but there is a difference between Tam Turnpenny and the bank, I trow.'

'Weel — weel, bank here bank there, I thought I had a friend in you, Mr. Bindloose; and here am I, come from my ain house all the way to yours for sma' comfort, I think.'

'My stars, madam,' said the perplexed scribe, 'what would you have me to do in such a blind story as yours, Mrs. Dods? Be a thought reasonable — consider that there is no *corpus delicti*.'

'*Corpus delicti*! and what's that?' said Meg; 'something to be paid for, nae doubt, for your hard words a' end in that. And what for suld I no have a *corpus delicti*, or a Habeas Corpus, or any other *corpus* that I like, sae lang as I am willing to lick and lay down the ready siller?'

'Lord help and pardon us, Mrs. Dods,' said the distressed agent, 'ye mistake the matter a'thegether! When I say there

is no *corpus delicti*, I mean to say there is no proof that a crime has been committed.' ¹

'And does the man say that murder is not a crime, than?' answered Meg, who had taken her own view of the subject far too strongly to be converted to any other. 'Weel I wot it's a crime, baith by the law of God and man, and mony a pretty man has been strapped for it.'

'I ken all that very weel,' answered the writer; 'but, my stars, Mrs. Dods, there is nae evidence of murder in this case — nae proof that a man has been slain — nae production of his dead body; and that is what we call the *corpus delicti*.'

'Weel, than, the deil lick it out of ye,' said Meg, rising in wrath, 'for I will awa' hame again; and as for the puir lad's body, I'll hae it fund, if it cost me turning the earth for three miles round wi' pick and shool — if it were but to give the puir bairn Christian burial, and to bring punishment on Mac'lurk and the murdering crew at the Waal, and to shame an auld doited fule like yoursell, John Bindloose.'

She rose in wrath to call her vehicle; but it was neither the interest nor the intention of the writer that his customer and he should part on such indifferent terms. He implored her patience, and reminded her that the horses, poor things, had just come off their stage — an argument which sounded irresistible in the ears of the old she-publican, in whose early education due care of the post-cattle mingled with the most sacred duties. She therefore resumed her seat again in a sullen mood, and Mr. Bindloose was cudgelling his brains for some argument which might bring the old lady to reason, when his attention was drawn by a noise in the passage.

¹ For example, a man cannot be tried for murder merely in the case of the non-appearance of an individual; there must be proof that the party has been murdered.

CHAPTER XV

A Praiser of Past Times

Now your trav
He and his toothpick at my worship's mess.

King John.

THE noise stated at the conclusion of last chapter to have disturbed Mr. Bindloose was the rapping of one, as in haste and impatience, at the bank-office door, which office was an apartment of the banker's house, on the left hand of his passage, as the parlour in which he had received Mrs. Dods was upon the right.

In general, this office was patent to all having business there; but at present, whatever might be the hurry of the party who knocked, the clerks within the office could not admit him, being themselves made prisoners by the prudent jealousy of Mr. Bindloose, to prevent them from listening to his consultation with Mrs. Dods. They therefore answered the angry and impatient knocking of the stranger only with stifled giggling from within, finding it no doubt an excellent joke that their master's precaution was thus interfering with their own discharge of duty.

With one or two hearty curses upon them, as the regular plagues of his life, Mr. Bindloose darted into the passage, and admitted the stranger into his official apartment. The doors both of the parlour and office remaining open, the ears of Luckie Dods (experienced, as the reader knows, in collecting intelligence) could partly overhear what passed. The conversation seemed to regard a cash transaction of some importance, as Meg became aware when the stranger raised a voice which was naturally sharp and high, as he did when uttering the following words, towards the close of a conversation which had lasted about five minutes — 'Premium! Not a pice, sir — not a courie — not a farthing. Premium for a Bank of England bill! D'ye take me for a fool, sir? Do not I know

that you call forty days par when you give remittances to London ?'

Mr. Bindloose was here heard to mutter something indistinctly about the custom of the trade.

'Custom !' retorted the stranger, 'no such thing — damn'd bad custom, if it is one — don't tell me of customs. 'Sbodikins, man, I know the rate of exchange all over the world, and have drawn bills from Timbuctoo. My friends in the Strand filed it along with Bruce's from Gondar. Talk to me of premium on a Bank of England post-bill ! What d'ye look at the bill for ? D'ye think it doubtful ? I can change it.'

'By no means necessary,' answered Bindloose, 'the bill is quite right ; but it is usual to indorse, sir.'

'Certainly — reach me a pen — d'ye think I can write with my rattan ? What sort of ink is this ? yellow as curry sauce ; never mind — there is my name — Peregrine Touchwood ; I got it from the Willoughbys, my Christian name. Have I my full change here ?'

'Your full change, sir,' answered Bindloose.

'Why, you should give *me* a premium, friend, instead of me giving you one.'

'It is out of our way, I assure you, sir,' said the banker — 'quite out of our way ; but if you would step into the parlour and take a cup of tea —'

'Why, ay,' said the stranger, his voice sounding more distinctly as, talking all the while, and ushered along by Mr. Bindloose, he left the office and moved towards the parlour, 'a cup of tea were no such bad thing, if one could come by it genuine ; but as for your premium —' So saying, he entered the parlour and made his bow to Mrs. Dods, who, seeing what she called a decent, purpose-like body, and aware that his pocket was replenished with English and Scottish paper-currency, returned the compliment with her best courtesy.

Mr. Touchwood, when surveyed more at leisure, was a short, stout, active man, who, though sixty years of age and upwards, retained in his sinews and frame the elasticity of an earlier period. His countenance expressed self-confidence, and something like a contempt for those who had neither seen nor endured so much as he had himself. His short black hair was mingled with grey, but not entirely whitened by it. His eyes were jet-black, deep-set, small, and sparkling, and contributed, with a short turned-up nose, to express an irritable and choleric habit. His complexion was burnt to a brick-colour by the vicissitudes

of climate to which it had been subjected ; and his face, which at the distance of a yard or two seemed hale and smooth, appeared, when closely examined, to be seamed with a million of wrinkles, crossing each other in every direction possible, but as fine as if drawn by the point of a very small needle.¹ His dress was a blue coat and buff waistcoat, half boots remarkably well blacked, and a silk handkerchief tied with military precision. The only antiquated part of his dress was a cocked hat of equilateral dimensions, in the button-hole of which he wore a very small cockade. Mrs. Dods, accustomed to judge of persons by their first appearance, said, that 'In the three steps which he made from the door to the tea-table she recognised, without the possibility of mistake, the gait of a person who was well to pass in the world ; and that,' she added with a wink, 'is what we victuallers are seldom deceived in. If a gold-laced waistcoat has an empty pouch, the plain swan's-down will be the brawer of the two.'

'A drizzling morning, good madam,' said Mr. Touchwood, as with a view of sounding what sort of company he had got into.

'A fine saft morning for the crap, sir,' answered Mrs. Dods, with equal solemnity.

'Right, my good madam : "soft" is the very word, though it has been some time since I heard it. I have cast a double hank about the round world since I last heard of a soft² morning.'

'You will be from these parts, then ?' said the writer, ingeniously putting a case, which, he hoped, would induce the stranger to explain himself. 'And yet, sir,' he added, after a pause, 'I was thinking that Touchwood is not a Scottish name, at least that I ken of.'

'Scottish name ! no,' replied the traveller ; 'but a man may have been in these parts before, without being a native, or, being a native, he may have had some reason to change his name ; there are many reasons why men change their names.'

'Certainly, and some of them very good ones,' said the lawyer ; 'as in the common case of an heir of entail, where deed of provision and tailzie is maist ordinarily implemented by taking up name and arms.'

¹ This was a peculiarity in the countenance of the celebrated Cossack leader, Platoff [1765-1818].

² An epithet which expresses, in Scotland, what the barometer calls rainy.

'Ay, or in the case of a man having made the country too hot for him under his own proper appellative,' said Mr. Touchwood.

'That is a supposition, sir,' replied the lawyer, 'which it would ill become me to put. But at any rate, if you knew this country formerly, ye cannot but be marvellously pleased with the change we have been making since the American war — hillsides bearing clover instead of heather; rents doubled, trebled, quadrupled; the auld reekie dungeons pulled down, and gentlemen living in as good houses as you will see anywhere in England.'

'Much good may it do them, for a pack of fools!' replied Mr. Touchwood, hastily.

'You do not seem much delighted with our improvements, sir?' said the banker, astonished to hear a dissentient voice where he conceived all men were unanimous.

'Pleased!' answered the stranger. 'Yes, as much pleased as I am with the devil, who I believe set many of them agoing. Ye have got an idea that everything must be changed. "Unstable as water, ye shall not excel." I tell ye, there have been more changes in this poor nook of yours within the last forty years than in the great empires of the East for the space of four thousand, for what I know.'

'And why not,' replied Bindloose, 'if they be changes for the better?'

'But they are *not* for the better,' replied Mr. Touchwood, eagerly. 'I left your peasantry as poor as rats indeed, but honest and industrious, enduring their lot in this world with firmness, and looking forward to the next with hope. Now they are mere eye-servants — looking at their watches, forsooth, every ten minutes, lest they should work for their master half an instant after loosing-time. And then, instead of studying the Bible on the work days, to kittle the clergymen with doubtful points of controversy on the Sabbath, they glean all their theology from Tom Paine and Voltaire.'

'Weel I wot the gentleman speaks truth,' said Mrs. Dods. 'I fand a bundle of their bawbee blasphemies in my ain kitchen. But I trow I made a clean house of the packman loon that brought them! No content wi' turning the tawpies' heads wi' ballants, and driving them daft wi' ribands, to cheat them out of their precious souls, and gie them the deevil's ware, that I suld say sae, in exchange for the siller that suld support their puir father that's aff wark and bedridden!'

'Father! madam,' said the stranger; 'they think no more of their father than Regan or Goneril.'

'In gude troth, ye have skeel of our sect, sir,' replied the dame; 'they are gomerils, every one of them. I tell them sae every hour of the day, but catch them profiting by the doctrine.'

'And then the brutes are turned mercenary, madam,' said Mr. Touchwood. 'I remember when a Scottishman would have scorned to touch a shilling that he had not earned, and yet was as ready to help a stranger as an Arab of the desert. And now, I did but drop my cane the other day as I was riding; a fellow who was working at the hedge made three steps to lift it; I thanked him, and my friend threw his hat on his head, and "damned my thanks, if that were all." St. Giles could not have excelled him.'

'Weel — weel,' said the banker, 'that may be a' as you say, sir, and nae doubt wealth makes wit waver; but the country's wealthy, that cannot be denied, and wealth, sir, ye ken ——'

'I know wealth makes itself wings,' answered the cynical stranger; 'but I am not quite sure we have it even now. You make a great show, indeed, with building and cultivation; but stock is not capital, any more than the fat of a corpulent man is health or strength.'

'Surely, Mr. Touchwood,' said Bindloose, who felt his own account in the modern improvements, 'a set of landlords, living like lairds in good earnest, and tenants with better housekeeping than the lairds used to have, and facing Whitsunday and Martinmas as I would face my breakfast — if these are not signs of wealth, I do not know where to seek for them.'

'They are signs of folly, sir,' replied Touchwood — 'folly that is poor, and renders itself poorer by desiring to be thought rich; and how they come by the means they are so ostentatious of, you, who are a banker, perhaps can tell me better than I can guess.'

'There is maybe an accommodation bill discounted now and then, Mr. Touchwood; but men must have accommodation, or the world would stand still: accommodation is the grease that makes the wheels go.'

'Ay, makes them go downhill to the devil,' answered Touchwood. 'I left you bothered about one Ayr bank, but the whole country is an Air bank now, I think. And who is to pay the piper? But it's all one — I will see little more of it — it is a perfect Babel, and would turn the head of a man who

has spent his life with people who love sitting better than running, silence better than speaking, who never eat but when they are hungry, never drink but when thirsty, never laugh without a jest, and never speak but when they have something to say. But here it is all run, ride, and drive — froth, foam, and flippancy — no steady — no character.

‘I’ll lay the burden of my life,’ said Dame Dods, looking towards her friend Bindloose, ‘that the gentleman has been at the new Spaw Waal yonder!’

‘Spaw do you call it, madam? If you mean the new establishment that has been spawned down yonder at St. Ronan’s, it is the very fountain-head of folly and coxcombry — a Hovel for noise and a Vanity Fair for nonsense — no well in your swamps tenanted by such a conceited colony of clamorous frogs!’

‘Sir — sir!’ exclaimed Dame Dods, delighted with the unqualified sentence passed upon her fashionable rivals, and eager to testify her respect for the judicious stranger who had pronounced it, ‘will you let me have the pleasure of pouring you out a dish of tea?’ And saying, she took bustling possession of the administration which had hitherto remained in the hands of Mr. Bindloose himself. ‘I hope it is to your taste, sir,’ she continued, when the traveller had accepted her courtesy with the grateful acknowledgment which men addicted to speak a great deal usually show to a willing auditor.

‘It is as good as we have any right to expect, ma’am,’ answered Mr. Touchwood; ‘not quite like what I have drunk at Canton with old Fong Qua, but the Celestial Empire does not send its best tea to Leadenhall Street, nor does Leadenhall Street send its best to Marchthorn.’

‘That may be very true, sir,’ replied the dame; ‘but I will venture to say that Mr. Bindloose’s tea is muckle better than you had at the Spaw Waal yonder.’

‘Tea, madam! I saw none. Ash leaves and blackthorn leaves were brought in in painted canisters, and handed about by powder-monkeys in livery, and consumed by those who liked it, amidst the chattering of parrots and the squalling of kittens. I longed for the days of the *Spectator*, when I might have laid my penny on the bar and retired without ceremony. But no — this blessed decoction was circulated under the auspices of some half-crazed bluestocking or other, and we were saddled with all the formality of an entertainment, for this miserable allowance of a cockle-shell full of cat-lap per head.’

'Weel, sir,' answered Dame Dods, 'all I can say is, that if it had been my luck to have served you at the Cleikum Inn, which our folk have kept for these twa generations, I canna pretend to say ye should have had such tea as ye have been used to in foreign parts where it grows, but the best I had I wad have gi'en it to a gentleman of your appearance, and I never charged mair than sixpence in all my time, and my father's before me.'

'I wish I had known the Old Inn was still standing, madam,' said the traveller; 'I should certainly have been your guest, and sent down for the water every morning; the doctors insist I must use Cheltenham, or some substitute, for the bile, though, d—n them, I believe it's only to hide their own ignorance. And I thought this Spaw would have been the least evil of the two; but I have been fairly overreached: one might as well live in the inside of a bell. I think young St. Ronan's must be mad, to have established such a Vanity Fair upon his father's old property.'

'Do you ken this St. Ronan's that now is?' inquired the dame.

'By report only,' said Mr. Touchwood; 'but I have heard of the family, and I think I have read of them, too, in Scottish history. I am sorry to understand they are lower in the world than they have been. This young man does not seem to take the best way to mend matters, spending his time among gamblers and blacklegs.'

'I should be sorry if it were so,' said honest Meg Dods, whose hereditary respect for the family always kept her from joining in any scandal affecting the character of the young laird. 'My forbears, sir, have had kindness frae his; and although maybe he may have forgotton all about it, it wad ill become me to say onything of him that should not be said of his father's son.'

Mr. Bindloose had not the same motive for forbearance; he declaimed against Mowbray as a thoughtless dissipater of his own fortune and that of others. 'I have some reason to speak,' he said, 'having two of his notes for £100 each, which I discounted out of mere kindness and respect for his ancient family, and which he thinks nae mair of retiring than he does of paying the national debt. And here has he been raking every shop in Marchthorn, to fit out an entertainment for all the fine folk at the Well yonder; and tradesfolk are obliged to take his acceptances for their furnishings. But they may cash his bills that will; I ken ane that will never advance a bawbee on ony

paper that has "John Mowbray" either on the back or front of it. He had mair need to be paying the debts which he has made already than making new anes, that he may feed fules and flatterers.'

'I believe he is likely to lose his preparations, too,' said Mr. Touchwood, 'for the entertainment has been put off, as I heard, in consequence of Miss Mowbray's illness.'

'Ay — ay, puir thing!' said Dame Margaret Dods; 'her health has been unsettled for this mony a day.'

'Something wrong here, they tell me,' said the traveller, pointing to his own forehead significantly.

'God only kens,' replied Mrs. Dods; 'but I rather suspect the heart than the head. The puir thing is hurried here and there, and down to the Waal and up again, and nae society or quiet at hame, and a' thing ganging this unthrifty gait; nae wonder she is no that weel settled.'

'Well,' replied Touchwood, 'she is worse they say than she has been, and that has occasioned the party at Shaws Castle having been put off. Besides, now this fine young lord has come down to the Well, undoubtedly they will wait her recovery.'

'A lord!' ejaculated the astonished Mrs. Dods — 'a lord come down to the Waal; they will be neither to haud nor to bind now: ance wud and aye waur. A lord! set them up and shute them forward! A lord! — the Lord have a care o' us! — a lord at the hottle! Maister Touchwood, it's my mind he will only prove to be a Lord o' Session.'

'Nay, not so, my good lady,' replied the traveller; 'he is an English lord, and, as they say, a Lord of Parliament; but some folk pretend to say there is a flaw in the title.'

'I'll warrant is there — a dozen of them!' said Meg, with alacrity; for she could by no means endure to think on the accumulation of dignity likely to accrue to the rival establishment from its becoming the residence of an actual nobleman. 'I'll warrant he'll prove a landlouping lord on their hand, and they will be e'en cheap o' the loss. And he has come down out of order it's like, and nae doubt he'll no be lang there before he will recover his health, for the credit of the Spaw.'

'Faith, madam, his present disorder is one which the Spaw will hardly cure: he is shot in the shoulder with a pistol-bullet — a robbery attempted, it seems; that is one of your new accomplishments — no such thing happened in Scotland in my time — men would have sooner expected to meet with the phoenix than with a highwayman.'

'And where did this happen, if you please, sir?' asked the man of bills.

'Somewhere near the old village,' replied the stranger; 'and, if I am rightly informed, on Wednesday last.'

'This explains your twa shots, I am thinking, Mrs. Dods,' said Mr. Bindloose; 'your groom heard them on the Wednesday; it must have been this attack on the stranger nobleman.'

'Maybe it was and maybe it was not,' said Mrs. Dods; 'but I'll see gude reason before I give up my ain judgment in that case. I wad like to ken if this gentleman,' she added, returning to the subject from which Mr. Touchwood's interesting conversation had for a few minutes diverted her thoughts, 'has heard aught of Mr. Tirl?'

'If you mean the person to whom this paper relates,' said the stranger, taking a printed handbill from his pocket, 'I heard of little else: the whole place rang of him, till I was almost as sick of Tyrrel as William Rufus was. Some idiotical quarrel which he had engaged in, and which he had not fought out, as their wisdom thought he should have done, was the principal cause of censure. That is another folly now, which has gained ground among you. Formerly, two old proud lairds, or cadets of good family, perhaps, quarrelled, and had a rencontre, or fought a duel after the fashion of their old Gothic ancestors; but men who had no grandfathers never dreamt of such folly. And here the folk denounce a trumpery dauber of canvas, for such I understand to be this hero's occupation, as if he were a field-officer, who made valour his profession, and who, if you deprived him of his honour, was like to be deprived of his bread at the same time. Ha, ha, ha! it reminds one of Don Quixote, who took his neighbour, Samson Carrasco, for a knight-errant.'

The perusal of this paper, which contained the notes formerly laid before the reader, containing the statement of Sir Bingo and the censure which the company at the Well had thought fit to pass upon his affair with Mr. Tyrrel, induced Mr. Bindloose to say to Mrs. Dods, with as little exultation on the superiority of his own judgment as human nature would permit—

'Ye see now that I was right, Mrs. Dods, and that there was nae earthly use in your fashing yoursell wi' this lang journey. The lad had just ta'en the bent rather than face Sir Bingo; and troth, I think him the wiser of the twa for sae doing. There ye hae print for it.'

Meg answered somewhat sullenly, 'Ye may be mista'en, for a' that, your ainsell, for as wise as ye are, Mr. Bindloose; I shall hae that matter mair strictly inquired into.'

This led to a renewal of the altercation concerning the probable fate of Tyrrel, in the course of which the stranger was induced to take some interest in the subject.

At length Mrs. Dods, receiving no countenance from the experienced lawyer for the hypothesis she had formed, rose, in something like displeasure, to order her whiskey to be prepared. But hostess as she was herself, when in her own dominions, she reckoned without her host in the present instance; for the humpbacked postilion, as absolute in his department as Mrs. Dods herself, declared that the cattle would not be fit for the road these two hours yet. The good lady was therefore obliged to wait his pleasure, bitterly lamenting all the while the loss which a house of public entertainment was sure to sustain by the absence of the landlord or landlady, and anticipating a long list of broken dishes, miscalculated reckonings, unarranged chambers, and other disasters, which she was to expect at her return. Mr. Bindloose, zealous to recover the regard of his good friend and client, which he had in some degree forfeited by contradicting her on a favourite subject, did not choose to offer the unpleasing, though obvious, topic of consolation, that an unfrequented inn is little exposed to the accident she apprehended. On the contrary, he condoled with her very cordially, and went so far as to hint that, if Mr. Touchwood had come to Marchthorn with post-horses, as he supposed from his dress, she could have the advantage of them to return with more despatch to St. Ronan's.

'I am not sure,' said Mr. Touchwood, suddenly, 'but I may return there myself. In that case I will be glad to set this good lady down, and to stay a few days at her house, if she will receive me. I respect a woman like you, ma'am, who pursue the occupation of your father. I have been in countries, ma'am, where people have followed the same trade, from father to son, for thousands of years. And I like the fashion; it shows a steadiness and sobriety of character.'

Mrs. Dods put on a joyous countenance at this proposal, protesting that all should be done in her power to make things agreeable; and while her good friend, Mr. Bindloose, expatiated upon the comfort her new guest would experience at the Cleikum, she silently contemplated with delight the prospect of a speedy and dazzling triumph, by carrying off a

creditable customer from her showy and successful rival at the Well.

'I shall be easily accommodated, ma'am,' said the stranger : 'I have travelled too much and too far to be troublesome. A Spanish venta, a Persian khan, or a Turkish caravanserail is all the same to me ; only, as I have no servant — indeed, never can be plagued with one of these idle loiterers — I must beg you will send to the Well for a bottle of the water on such mornings as I cannot walk there myself, I find it is really of some service to me.'

Mrs. Dods readily promised compliance with this reasonable request ; graciously conceding, that there 'could be nae ill in the water itsell, but maybe some gude ; it was only the New Inn, and the daft haverils that they ca'd the Company, that she misliked. Folk had a jest that St. Ronan dookit the deevil in the Waal, which garr'd it taste aye since of brimstane ; but she dared to say that was a' Papist nonsense, for she was tell't by him that kenn'd weel, and that was the minister himsell, that St. Ronan was nane of your idolatrous Roman saunts, but a Chaldee (meaning probably a Culdee), whilk was doubtless a very different story.'

Matters being thus arranged to the satisfaction of both parties, the post-chaise was ordered, and speedily appeared at the door of Mr. Bindloose's mansion. It was not without a private feeling of reluctance that honest Meg mounted the step of a vehicle on the door of which was painted, 'FOX INN AND HOTEL, ST. RONAN'S WELL' ; but it was too late to start such scruples.

'I never thought to have entered ane o' their hurley-hackets,' she said, as she seated herself ; 'and sic a like thing as it is — scarce room for twa folk ! Weel I wot, Mr. Touchwood, when I was in the hiring line, our twa chaises wad hae carried, ilk ane o' them, four grown folk and as mony bairns. I trust that doited creature Anthony will come awa' back wi' my whiskey and the cattle as soon as they have had their feed. Are ye sure ye hae room eneugh, sir ? I wad fain hotch mysell farther yont.'

'O, ma'am,' answered the Oriental, 'I am accustomed to all sorts of conveyances — a dooly, a litter, a cart, a palanquin, or a post-chaise are all alike to me ; I think I could be an inside with Queen Mab in a nutshell, rather than not get forward. Begging you many pardons, if you have no particular objections, I will light my sheroot,' etc. etc. etc.

CHAPTER XVI

The Clergyman

A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a-year.
GOLDSMITH'S *Deserted Village*.

MRS. DODS'S conviction that her friend Tyrrel had been murdered by the sanguinary Captain Mac'Turk remained firm and unshaken; but some researches for the supposed body having been found fruitless, as well as expensive, she began to give up the matter in despair. 'She had done her duty,' 'she left the matter to them that had a charge anent such things,' and 'Providence would bring the mystery to light in His own fitting time'—such were the moralities with which the good dame consoled herself; and, with less obstinacy than Mr. Bindloose had expected, she retained her opinion without changing her banker and man of business.

Perhaps Meg's acquiescent inactivity in a matter which she had threatened to probe so deeply was partly owing to the place of poor Tyrrel being supplied in her Blue Chamber, and in her daily thoughts and cares, by her new guest, Mr. Touchwood; in possessing whom, a deserter as he was from the Well, she obtained, according to her view of the matter, a decided triumph over her rivals. It sometimes required, however, the full force of this reflection to induce Meg, old and crabbed as she was, to submit to the various caprices and exactions of attention which were displayed by her new lodger. Never any man talked so much as Touchwood of his habitual indifference to food and accommodation in travelling; and probably there never was any traveller who gave more trouble in a house of entertainment. He had his own whims about cookery; and when these were contradicted, especially if he felt at the same time a twinge of incipient gout, one would have thought he had taken his lessons in the pastry-shop of Bedreddin Hassan, and

was ready to renew the scene of the unhappy cream-tart which was compounded without pepper. Every now and then he started some new doctrine in culinary matters which Mrs. Dods deemed a heresy ; and then the very house rang with their disputes. Again, his bed must necessarily be made at a certain angle from the pillow to the footposts ; and the slightest deviation from this disturbed, he said, his nocturnal rest, and did certainly ruffle his temper. He was equally whimsical about the brushing of his clothes, the arrangement of the furniture in his apartment, and a thousand minutiae, which, in conversation, he seemed totally to contemn.

It may seem singular, but such is the inconsistency of human nature, that a guest of this fanciful and capricious disposition gave much more satisfaction to Mrs. Dods than her quiet and indifferent friend, Mr. Tyrrel. If her present lodger could blame, he could also applaud ; and no artist, conscious of such skill as Mrs. Dods possessed, is indifferent to the praises of such a connoisseur as Mr. Touchwood. The pride of art comforted her for the additional labour ; nor was it a matter unworthy of this most honest publican's consideration, that the guests who give most trouble are usually those who incur the largest bills, and pay them with the best grace. On this point Touchwood was a jewel of a customer. He never denied himself the gratification of the slightest whim, whatever expense he might himself incur, or whatever trouble he might give to those about him ; and all was done under protestation that the matter in question was the most indifferent thing to him in the world. 'What the devil did he care for Burgess's sauces, he that had eat his kouscousou spiced with nothing but the sand of the desert ? only it was a shame for Mrs. Dods to be without what every decent house, above the rank of an alehouse, ought to be largely provided with.'

In short, he fussed, fretted, commanded, and was obeyed ; kept the house in hot water, and yet was so truly good-natured when essential matters were in discussion, that it was impossible to bear him the least ill-will ; so that Mrs. Dods, though in a moment of spleen she sometimes wished him at the top of Tintock, always ended by singing forth his praises. She could not, indeed, help suspecting that he was a nabob, as well from his conversation about foreign parts as from his freaks of indulgence to himself and generosity to others — attributes which she understood to be proper to most 'men of Ind.' But although the reader has heard her testify a general

dislike to this species of Fortune's favourites, Mrs. Dods had sense enough to know that a nabob living in the neighbourhood, who raises the price of eggs and poultry upon the good housewives around, was very different from a nabob residing within her own gates, drawing all his supplies from her own larder, and paying, without hesitation or question, whatever bills her conscience permitted her to send in. In short, to come back to the point at which we perhaps might have stopped some time since, landlady and guest were very much pleased with each other.

But *ennui* finds entrance into every scene when the gloss of novelty is over; and the fiend began to seize upon Mr. Touchwood just when he had got all matters to his mind in the Cleikum Inn—had instructed Dame Dods in the mysteries of curry and mulligatawny; drilled the chambermaid into the habit of making his bed at the angle recommended by Sir John Sinclair; and made some progress in instructing the hump-backed postilion in the Arabian mode of grooming. Pamphlets and newspapers, sent from London and from Edinburgh by loads, proved inadequate to rout this invader of Mr. Touchwood's comfort; and, at last, he bethought himself of company. The natural resource would have been the Well; but the traveller had a holy shivering of awe which crossed him at the very recollection of Lady Penelope, who had worked him rather hard during his former brief residence; and although Lady Binks's beauty might have charmed an Asiatic by the plump graces of its contour, our senior was past the thoughts of a sultana and a haram. At length a bright idea crossed his mind, and he suddenly demanded of Mrs. Dods, who was pouring out his tea for breakfast into a large cup of a very particular species of china, of which he had presented her with a service on condition of her rendering him this personal good office—

'Pray, Mrs. Dods, what sort of a man is your minister?'

'He's just a man like other men, Maister Touchwood,' replied Meg; 'what sort of a man should he be?'

'A man like other men!—ay, that is to say, he has the usual complement of legs and arms, eyes and ears. But is he a sensible man?'

'No muckle o' that, sir,' answered Dame Dods; 'for if he was drinking this very tea that ye gat down from London wi' the mail, he wad mistake it for common bohea.'

'Then he has not all his organs—wants a nose, or the

use of one at least,' said Mr. Touchwood; 'the tea is right gunpowder—a perfect nosegay.'

'Aweel, that may be,' said the landlady; 'but I have gi'en the minister a dram frae my ain best bottle of real cogniac brandy, and may I never stir frae the bit, if he didna commend my whisky when he set down the glass! There is no ane o' them in the presbytery but himsell—ay, or in the synod either—but wad hae kenn'd whisky frae brandy.'

'But what *sort* of man is he? Has he learning?' demanded Touchwood.

'Learning! eneugh o' that,' answered Meg: 'just dung donnart wi' learning—lets a' things about the manse gang whilk gate they will, sae they dinna plague him upon the score. An awfu' thing it is to see sic an ill-red-up house! If I had the twa tawpies that sorn upon the honest man ae week under my drilling, I think I wad show them how to sort a lodging!'

'Does he preach well?' asked the guest.

'Oh, weel eneugh—weel eneugh. Sometimes he will fling in a lang word or a bit of learning that our farmers and bannet-lairds canna sae weel follow; but what of that, as I am aye telling them? Them that pay stipend get aye the mair for their siller.'

'Does he attend to his parish? Is he kind to the poor?'

'Ower muckle o' that, Maister Touchwood. I am sure he makes the Word gude, and turns not away from those that ask o' him: his very pocket is picked by a wheen ne'er-doweel blackguards that gae sorning through the country.'

'Sorning through the country, Mrs. Dods! What would you think if you had seen the fakirs, the dervises, the bonzes, the imaums, the monks, and the mendicants that I have seen? But go on, never mind. Does this minister of yours come much into company?'

'Company! gae wa', replied Meg, 'he keeps nae company at a'; neither in his ain house or ony gate else. He comes down in the morning in a lang ragged nightgown, like a potato bogle, and down he sits amang his books; and if they dinna bring him something to eat, the puir demented body has never the heart to cry for aught, and he has been kenn'd to sit for ten hours thegither, black fasting, whilk is a' mere Papistrie, though he does it just out o' forget.'

'Why, landlady, in that case, your parson is anything but the ordinary kind of man you described him. Forget his

dinner! the man must be mad. He shall dine with me to-day — he shall have such a dinner as I'll be bound he won't forget in a hurry.'

'Ye'll maybe find that easier said than dune,' said Mrs. Dods; 'the honest man hasna, in a sense, the taste of his mouth; forbye, he never dines out of his ain house — that is, when he dines at a'. A drink of milk and a bit of bread serves his turn, or maybe a cauld potato. It's a heathenish fashion of him, for as good a man as he is, for surely there is nae Christian man but loves his own bowels.'

'Why, that may be,' answered Touchwood; 'but I have known many who took so much care of their own bowels, my good dame, as to have none for any one else. But come, bustle to the work — get us as good a dinner for two as you can set out; have it ready at three to an instant; get the old hock I had sent me from Cockburn, a bottle of the particular Indian sherry, and another of your own old claret — fourth bin, you know, Meg. And stay, he is a priest, and must have port; have all ready, but don't bring the wine into the sun, as that silly fool Beck did the other day. I can't go down to the larder myself, but let us have no blunders.'

'Nae fear — nae fear,' said Meg, with a toss of the head, 'I need naeboddy to look into my larder but mysell, I trow; but it's an unco order of wine for twa folk, and ane o' them a minister.'

'Why, you foolish person, is there not the woman up the village that has just brought another fool into the world, and will she not need sack and caudle, if we leave some of our wine?'

'A gude ale-posset wad set her better,' said Meg; 'however, if it's your will, it shall be my pleasure. But the like of sic a gentleman as yoursell never entered my doors!'

The traveller was gone before she had completed the sentence; and, leaving Meg to bustle and maunder at her leisure, away he marched, with the haste that characterised all his motions when he had any new project in his head, to form an acquaintance with the minister of St. Ronan's, whom, while he walks down the street to the manse, we will endeavour to introduce to the reader.

The Rev. Josiah Cargill was the son of a small farmer in the south of Scotland; and a weak constitution, joined to the disposition for study which frequently accompanies infirm health, induced his parents, though at the expense of some sacrifices, to educate him for the ministry. They were the rather led to

submit to the privations which were necessary to support this expense, because they conceived, from their family traditions, that he had in his veins some portion of the blood of that celebrated Boanerges of the Covenant, Donald Cargill, who was slain by the persecutors at the town of Queensferry in the melancholy days of Charles II., merely because, in the plenitude of his sacerdotal power, he had cast out of the church, and delivered over to Satan by a formal excommunication, the king and royal family, with all the ministers and courtiers thereunto belonging. But if Josiah was really derived from this uncompromising champion, the heat of the family spirit which he might have inherited was qualified by the sweetness of his own disposition and the quiet temper of the times in which he had the good fortune to live. He was characterised by all who knew him as a mild, gentle, and studious lover of learning, who, in the quiet prosecution of his own sole object, the acquisition of knowledge, and especially of that connected with his profession, had the utmost indulgence for all whose pursuits were different from his own. His sole relaxations were those of a retiring, mild, and pensive temper, and were limited to a ramble, almost always solitary, among the woods and hills, in praise of which he was sometimes guilty of a sonnet, but rather because he could not help the attempt than as proposing to himself the fame or the rewards which attend the successful poet. Indeed, far from seeking to insinuate his fugitive pieces into magazines and newspapers, he blushed at his poetical attempts even while alone, and, in fact, was rarely so indulgent to his vein as to commit them to paper.

From the same maid-like modesty of disposition, our student suppressed a strong natural turn towards drawing, although he was repeatedly complimented upon the few sketches which he made by some whose judgment was generally admitted. It was, however, this neglected talent which, like the swift feet of the stag in the fable, was fated to render him a service which he might in vain have expected from his worth and learning.

My Lord Bidmore, a distinguished connoisseur, chanced to be in search of a private tutor for his son and heir, the Honourable Augustus Bidmore, and for this purpose had consulted the professor of theology, who passed before him in review several favourite students, any of whom he conceived well suited for the situation; but still his answer to the important and unlooked-for question, 'Did the candidate understand drawing?' was answered in the negative. The professor, indeed, added

his opinion, that such an accomplishment was neither to be desired nor expected in a student of theology; but, pressed hard with this condition as a *sine quâ non*, he at length did remember a dreaming lad about the hall, who seldom could be got to speak above his breath, even when delivering his essays, but was said to have a strong turn for drawing. This was enough for my Lord Bidmore, who contrived to obtain a sight of some of young Cargill's sketches, and was satisfied that, under such a tutor, his son could not fail to maintain that character for hereditary taste which his father and grandfather had acquired at the expense of a considerable estate, the representative value of which was now the painted canvas in the great gallery at Bidmore House.

Upon following up the inquiry concerning the young man's character, he was found to possess all the other necessary qualifications of learning and morals, in a greater degree than perhaps Lord Bidmore might have required; and, to the astonishment of his fellow-students, but more especially to his own, Josiah Cargill was promoted to the desired and desirable situation of private tutor to the Honourable Mr. Bidmore.

Mr. Cargill did his duty ably and conscientiously by a spoiled though good-humoured lad of weak health and very ordinary parts. He could not, indeed, inspire into him any portion of the deep and noble enthusiasm which characterises the youth of genius; but his pupil made such progress in each branch of his studies as his capacity enabled him to attain. He understood the learned languages, and could be very profound on the subject of various readings; he pursued science, and could class shells, pack mosses, and arrange minerals; he drew without taste, but with much accuracy; and although he attained no commanding height in any pursuit, he knew enough of many studies, literary and scientific, to fill up his time, and divert from temptation a head which was none of the strongest in point of resistance.

Miss Augusta Bidmore, his lordship's only other child, received also the instructions of Cargill in such branches of science as her father chose she should acquire and her tutor was capable to teach. But her progress was as different from that of her brother as the fire of heaven differs from that grosser element which the peasant piles upon his smouldering hearth. Her acquirements in Italian and Spanish literature, in history, in drawing, and in all elegant learning were such as to enchant her teacher, while at the same time it kept him on

the stretch lest, in her successful career, the scholar should outstrip the master.

Alas! such intercourse, fraught as it is with dangers arising out of the best and kindest, as well as the most natural, feelings on either side, proved in the present, as in many other instances, fatal to the peace of the preceptor. Every feeling heart will excuse a weakness which we shall presently find carried with it its own severe punishment. Cadenus, indeed, believe him who will, has assured us that, in such a perilous intercourse, he himself preserved the limits which were unhappily transgressed by the unfortunate Vanessa, his more impassioned pupil :

The innocent delight he took,
To see the virgin mind her book,
Was but the master's secret joy
In school to hear the finest boy.

But Josiah Cargill was less fortunate, or less cautious. He suffered his fair pupil to become inexpressibly dear to him, before he discovered the precipice towards which he was moving under the direction of a blind and misplaced passion. He was indeed utterly incapable of availing himself of the opportunities afforded by his situation to involve his pupil in the toils of a mutual passion. Honour and gratitude alike forbade such a line of conduct, even had it been consistent with the natural bashfulness, simplicity, and innocence of his disposition. To sigh and suffer in secret, to form resolutions of separating himself from a situation so fraught with danger, and to postpone from day to day the accomplishment of a resolution so prudent, was all to which the tutor found himself equal ; and it is not improbable that the veneration with which he regarded his patron's daughter, with the utter hopelessness of the passion which he nourished, tended to render his love yet more pure and disinterested.

At length the line of conduct which reason had long since recommended could no longer be the subject of procrastination. Mr. Bidmore was destined to foreign travel for a twelvemonth, and Mr. Cargill received from his patron the alternative of accompanying his pupil, or retiring upon a suitable provision, the reward of his past instructions. It can hardly be doubted which he preferred ; for, while he was with young Bidmore, he did not seem entirely separated from his sister. He was sure to hear of Augusta frequently, and to see some part, at least, of the letters which she was to write to her brother ; he

to witness her son's promotion to a charge which in her eye was more honourable and desirable than an episcopal see. She heard her chalk out the life which they were to lead together in the humble independence which had thus fallen on him—he heard all this, and had no power to crush her hopes and his triumph by the indulgence of his own romantic feelings. He passed almost mechanically through the usual forms, and was inducted into the living of St. Ronan's.

Although fanciful and romantic, it was not in Josiah Cargill's nature to yield to unavailing melancholy; yet he sought relief, not in society, but in solitary study. His seclusion was the more complete, that his mother, whose education had been as much confined as her fortunes, felt awkward under her new dignities, and willingly acquiesced in her son's secession from society, and spent her whole time in superintending the little household, and in her way providing for all emergencies the occurrence of which might call Josiah out of his favourite book-room. As old age rendered her inactive, she began to regret the incapacity of her son to superintend his own household, and talked something of matrimony and the mystery of the 'muckle wheel.' To these admonitions Mr. Cargill returned only slight and evasive answers; and when the old lady slept in the village churchyard, at a reverend old age there was no one to perform the office of superintendent in the minister's family. Neither did Josiah Cargill seek for any, but patiently submitted to all the evils with which a bachelor estate is attended, and which were at least equal to those which beset the renowned Mago-Pico¹ during his state of celibacy. His butter was ill churned, and declared by all but himself and the quean who made it altogether uneatable, his milk was burnt in the pan, his fruit and vegetables were stolen, and his black stockings mended with blue and white thread.

For all these things the minister cared not, his mind ever bent upon far different matters. Do not let my fair reader do Josiah more than justice, or suppose that, like Belshazzar in the desert, he remained for years the victim of an unfortunate and misplaced passion. No—to the shame of the male sex be it spoken, that no degree of hopeless love, however desperate and sincere, can ever continue for years to embitter life. There must be hope—there must be uncertainty—there must be reciprocity, to enable the tyrant of the soul to secur

¹ See Note 7.

a dominion of very long duration over a manly and well-constituted mind, which is itself desirous to *will* its freedom. The memory of Augusta had long faded from Josiah's thoughts, or was remembered only as a pleasing, but melancholy and unsubstantial, dream, while he was straining forward in pursuit of a yet nobler and coyer mistress — in a word, of Knowledge herself.

Every hour that he could spare from his parochial duties, which he discharged with zeal honourable to his heart and head, was devoted to his studies and spent among his books. But this chase of wisdom, though in itself interesting and dignified, was indulged to an excess which diminished the respectability, nay, the utility, of the deceived student; and he forgot, amid the luxury of deep and dark investigations, that society has its claims, and that the knowledge which is unimparted is necessarily a barren talent, and is lost to society, like the miser's concealed hoard, by the death of the proprietor. His studies were also under the additional disadvantage, that, being pursued for the gratification of a desultory longing after knowledge, and directed to no determined object, they turned on points rather curious than useful, and while they served for the amusement of the student himself, promised little utility to mankind at large.

Bewildered amid abstruse researches, metaphysical and historical, Mr. Cargill, living only for himself and his books, acquired many ludicrous habits, which exposed the secluded student to the ridicule of the world, and which tinged, though they did not altogether obscure, the natural civility of an amiable disposition, as well as the acquired habits of politeness which he had learned in the good society that frequented Lord Bidmore's mansion. He not only indulged in neglect of dress and appearance, and all those ungainly tricks which men are apt to acquire by living very much alone, but besides, and especially, he became probably the most abstracted and absent man of a profession peculiarly liable to cherish such habits. No man fell so regularly into the painful dilemma of mistaking, or, in Scottish phrase, 'miskinning,' the person he spoke to, or more frequently inquired of an old maid for her husband, of a childless wife about her young people, of the distressed widower for the spouse at whose funeral he himself had assisted but a fortnight before; and none was ever more familiar with strangers whom he had never seen, or seemed more estranged from those who had a title to think themselves well known to

him. The worthy man perpetually confounded sex, age, and calling; and when a blind beggar extended his hand for charity, he has been known to return the civility by taking off his hat, making a low bow, and hoping his worship was well.

Among his brethren, Mr. Cargill alternately commanded respect by the depth of his erudition and gave occasion to laughter from his odd peculiarities. On the latter occasions he used abruptly to withdraw from the ridicule he had provoked; for, notwithstanding the general mildness of his character, his solitary habits had engendered a testy impatience of contradiction, and a keener sense of pain arising from the satire of others than was natural to his unassuming disposition. As for his parishioners, they enjoyed, as may reasonably be supposed, many a hearty laugh at their pastor's expense, and were sometimes, as Mrs. Dods hinted, more astonished than edified by his learning; for, in pursuing a point of biblical criticism, he did not altogether remember that he was addressing a popular and unlearned assembly, not delivering a *concio ad clerum* — a mistake not arising from any conceit of his learning or wish to display it, but from the same absence of mind which induced an excellent divine, when preaching before a party of criminals condemned to death, to break off by promising the wretches, who were to suffer next morning, 'the rest of the discourse at the first proper opportunity.' But all the neighbourhood acknowledged Mr. Cargill's serious and devout discharge of his ministerial duties; and the poorer parishioners forgave his innocent peculiarities, in consideration of his unbounded charity; while the heritors, if they ridiculed the abstractions of Mr. Cargill on some subjects, had the grace to recollect that they had prevented him from suing an augmentation of stipend, according to the fashion of the clergy around him, or from demanding at their hands a new manse, or the repair of the old one. He once, indeed, wished that they would amend the roof of his book-room, which 'rained in' in a very pluvius manner; but receiving no direct answer from our friend Meiklewham, who neither relished the proposal nor saw means of eluding it, the minister quietly made the necessary repairs at his own expense, and gave the heritors no farther trouble on the subject.

Such was the worthy divine whom our *bon vivant* at the Cleikum Inn hoped to conciliate by a good dinner and Cockburn's particular — an excellent menstruum in most cases, but not likely to be very efficacious on the present occasion.

CHAPTER XVII

The Acquaintance

'T wixt us thus the difference trims :—
Using head instead of limbs,
You have read what I have seen ;
Using limbs instead of head,
I have seen what you have read —
Which way does the balance lean ?

BUTLER.

OUR traveller, rapid in all his resolutions and motions, strode stoutly down the street, and arrived at the manse, which was, as we have already described it, all but absolutely ruinous. The total desolation and want of order about the door would have argued the place uninhabited had it not been for two or three miserable tubs with suds, or such-like sluttish contents, which were left there, that those who broke their shins among them might receive a sensible proof that 'here the hand of woman had been.' The door being half off its hinges, the entrance was for the time protected by a broken harrow, which must necessarily be removed before entry could be obtained. The little garden, which might have given an air of comfort to the old house had it been kept in any order, was abandoned to a desolation of which that of the sluggard was only a type ; and the minister's man, an attendant always proverbial for doing half work, and who seemed in the present instance to do none, was seen among docks and nettles, solacing himself with the few gooseberries which remained on some moss-grown bushes. To him Mr. Touchwood called loudly, inquiring after his master ; but the clown, conscious of being taken in flagrant delict, as the law says, fled from him like a guilty thing instead of obeying his summons, and was soon heard 'hupping' and 'geeing' to the cart, which he had left on the other side of the broken wall.

Disappointed in his application to the man-servant, Mr. Touchwood knocked with his cane, at first gently, then harder,

hallooed, bellowed, and shouted, in the hope of calling the attention of some one within doors, but received not a word in reply. At length, thinking that no trespass could be committed upon so forlorn and deserted an establishment, he removed the obstacles to entrance with such a noise as he thought must necessarily have alarmed some one, if there was any live person about the house at all. All was still silent; and, entering a passage where the damp walls and broken flags corresponded to the appearance of things out of doors, he opened a door to the left, which, wonderful to say, still had a latch remaining, and found himself in the parlour, and in the presence of the person whom he came to visit.

Amid a heap of books and other literary lumber which had accumulated around him, sat, in his well-worn leathern elbow-chair, the learned minister of St. Ronan's — a thin, spare man, beyond the middle age, of a dark complexion, but with eyes which, though now obscured and vacant, had been once bright, soft, and expressive, and whose features seemed interesting, the rather that, notwithstanding the carelessness of his dress, he was in the habit of performing his ablutions with Eastern precision; for he had forgot neatness, but not cleanliness. His hair might have appeared much more disorderly had it not been thinned by time, and disposed chiefly around the sides of his countenance and the back part of his head; black stockings, ungartered, marked his professional dress, and his feet were thrust into the old slipshod shoes which served him instead of slippers. The rest of his garments, as far as visible, consisted in a plaid nightgown wrapt in long folds round his stooping and emaciated length of body, and reaching down to the slippers aforesaid. He was so intently engaged in studying the book before him, a folio of no ordinary bulk, that he totally disregarded the noise which Mr. Touchwood made in entering the room, as well as the coughs and hems with which he thought it proper to announce his presence.

No notice being taken of these inarticulate signals, Mr. Touchwood, however great an enemy he was to ceremony, saw the necessity of introducing his business as an apology for his intrusion.

'Hem! sir — ha, hem! You see before you a person in some distress for want of society, who has taken the liberty to call on you as a good pastor, who may be, in Christian charity, willing to afford him a little of your company, since he is tired of his own.'



MR. TOUCHWOOD INTRODUCES HIMSELF.
From a painting by W. B. Hole, A.R.S.A.

Of this speech Mr. Cargill only understood the words 'distress' and 'charity'—sounds with which he was well acquainted, and which never failed to produce some effect on him. He looked at his visitor with lack-lustre eye, and, without correcting the first opinion which he had formed, although the stranger's plump and sturdy frame, as well as his nicely-brushed coat, glancing cane, and, above all, his upright and self-satisfied manner, resembled in no respect the dress, form, or bearing of a mendicant, he quietly thrust a shilling into his hand, and relapsed into the studious contemplation which the entrance of Touchwood had interrupted.

'Upon my word, my good sir,' said his visitor, surprised at a degree of absence of mind which he could hardly have conceived possible, 'you have entirely mistaken my object.'

'I am sorry my mite is insufficient, my friend,' said the clergyman, without again raising his eyes, 'it is all I have at present to bestow.'

'If you will have the kindness to look up for a moment, my good sir,' said the traveller, 'you may possibly perceive that you labour under a considerable mistake.'

Mr. Cargill raised his head, recalled his attention, and, seeing that he had a well-dressed, respectable-looking person before him, he exclaimed in much confusion, 'Ha!—yes—on my word, I was so immersed in my book—I believe—I think I have the pleasure to see my worthy friend, Mr. Lavender?'

'No such thing, Mr. Cargill,' replied Mr. Touchwood. 'I will save you the trouble of trying to recollect me—you never saw me before. But do not let me disturb your studies; I am in no hurry, and my business can wait your leisure.'

'I am much obliged,' said Mr. Cargill; 'have the goodness to take a chair, if you can find one. I have a train of thought to recover—a slight calculation to finish—and then I am at your command.'

The visitor found among the broken furniture, not without difficulty, a seat strong enough to support his weight, and sat down, resting upon his cane, and looking attentively at his host, who very soon became totally insensible of his presence. A long pause of total silence ensued, only disturbed by the rustling leaves of the folio from which Mr. Cargill seemed to be making extracts, and now and then by a little exclamation of surprise and impatience, when he dipped his pen, as happened once or twice, into his snuff-box, instead of the ink-standish which stood beside it. At length, just as Mr. Touchwood began

to think the scene as tedious as it was singular, the abstracted student raised his head, and spoke as if in soliloquy, 'From Acon, Accor, or St. John d'Acre to Jerusalem, how far?'

'Twenty-three miles north-north-west,' answered his visitor, without hesitation.

Mr. Cargill expressed no more surprise at a question which he had put to himself being answered by the voice of another than if he had found the distance on the map, and, indeed, was not probably aware of the medium through which his question had been solved; and it was the tenor of the answer alone which he attended to in his reply. 'Twenty-three miles — Ingulphus,' laying his hand on the volume, 'and Jeffrey Wine-sauf do not agree in this.'

'They may both be d—d, then, for lying blockheads,' answered the traveller.

'You might have contradicted their authority, sir, without using such an expression,' said the divine, gravely.

'I cry you mercy, doctor,' said Mr. Touchwood; 'but would you compare these parchment fellows with me, that have made my legs my compasses over great part of the inhabited world?'

'You have been in Palestine, then?' said Mr. Cargill, drawing himself upright in his chair, and speaking with eagerness and with interest.

'You may swear that, doctor, and at Acre too. Why, I was there the month after Boney had found it too hard a nut to crack. I dined with Sir Sydney's chum, old Djezzar Pacha, and an excellent dinner we had, but for a dessert of noses and ears brought on after the last remove, which spoiled my digestion. Old Djezzar thought it so good a joke, that you hardly saw a man in Acre whose face was not as flat as the palm of my hand. Gad, I respect my olfactory organ, and set off the next morning as fast as the most cursed hard-trotting dromedary that ever fell to poor pilgrim's lot could contrive to tramp.'

'If you have really been in the Holy Land, sir,' said Mr. Cargill, whom the reckless gaiety of Touchwood's manner rendered somewhat suspicious of a trick, 'you will be able materially to enlighten me on the subject of the Crusades.'

'They happened before my time, doctor,' replied the traveller.

'You are to understand that my curiosity refers to the geography of the countries where these events took place,' answered Mr. Cargill.

'O! as to that matter, you are lighted on your feet,' said Mr. Touchwood; 'for the time present I can fit you. Turk, Arab, Copt, and Druse, I know every one of them, and can make you as well acquainted with them as myself. Without stirring a step beyond your threshold, you shall know Syria as well as I do. But one good turn deserves another: in that case, you must have the goodness to dine with me.'

'I go seldom abroad, sir,' said the minister, with a good deal of hesitation, for his habits of solitude and seclusion could not be entirely overcome, even by the expectation raised by the traveller's discourse; 'yet I cannot deny myself the pleasure of waiting on a gentleman possessed of so much experience.'

'Well, then,' said Mr. Touchwood, 'three be the hour—I never dine later, and always to a minute—and the place, the Cleikum Inn, up the way; where Mrs. Dods is at this moment busy in making ready such a dinner as your learning has seldom seen, doctor, for I brought the receipts from the four different quarters of the globe.'

Upon this treaty they parted; and Mr. Cargill, after musing for a short while upon the singular chance which had sent a living man to answer those doubts for which he was in vain consulting ancient authorities, at length resumed, by degrees, the train of reflection and investigation which Mr. Touchwood's visit had interrupted, and in a short time lost all recollection of his episodic visitor and of the engagement which he had formed.

Not so Mr. Touchwood, who, when not occupied with business of real importance, had the art, as the reader may have observed, to make a prodigious fuss about nothing at all. Upon the present occasion, he bustled in and out of the kitchen, till Mrs. Dods lost patience, and threatened to pin the dishcloth to his tail—a menace which he pardoned, in consideration that in all the countries which he had visited, which are sufficiently civilised to boast of cooks, these artists, toiling in their fiery element, have a privilege to be testy and impatient. He therefore retreated from the torrid region of Mrs. Dods's microcosm, and employed his time in the usual devices of loiterers, partly by walking for an appetite, partly by observing the progress of his watch towards three o'clock, when he had happily succeeded in getting an employment more serious. His table in the Blue Parlour was displayed with two covers, after the fairest fashion of the Cleikum Inn; yet the landlady, with a look 'civil but sly,' contrived to insinuate a doubt whether the clergyman would come 'when a' was dune.'

Mr. Touchwood scorned to listen to such an insinuation until the fated hour arrived and brought with it no Mr. Cargill. The impatient entertainer allowed five minutes for difference of clocks and variation of time, and other five for the procrastination of one who went little into society. But no sooner were the last five minutes expended than he darted off for the manse, not, indeed, much like a greyhound or a deer, but with the momentum of a corpulent and well-appetised elderly gentleman, who is in haste to secure his dinner. He bounced without ceremony into the parlour, where he found the worthy divine clothed in the same plaid nightgown, and seated in the very elbow-chair, in which he had left him five hours before. His sudden entrance recalled to Mr. Cargill, not an accurate, but something of a general, recollection of what had passed in the morning, and he hastened to apologise with — ‘Ha! — indeed — already? Upon my word, Mr. A — a —, I mean, my dear friend — I am afraid I have used you ill: I forgot to order any dinner; but we will do our best. Eppie — Eppie!’

Not at the first, second, nor third call, but *ex intervallo*, as the lawyers express it, Eppie, a bare-legged, shock-headed, thick-ankled, red-armed wench, entered, and announced her presence by an emphatic ‘What’s your wull?’

‘Have you got anything in the house for dinner, Eppie?’

‘Naething but bread and milk, plenty o’t; what should I have?’

‘You see, sir,’ said Mr. Cargill, ‘you are like to have a Pythagorean entertainment; but you are a traveller, and have doubtless been in your time thankful for bread and milk.’

‘But never when there was anything better to be had,’ said Mr. Touchwood. ‘Come, doctor, I beg your pardon, but your wits are fairly gone a-wool-gathering: it was *I* invited *you* to dinner up at the inn yonder, and not you me.’

‘On my word, and so it was,’ said Mr. Cargill; ‘I knew I was quite right — I knew there was a dinner engagement betwixt us, I was sure of that, and that is the main point. Come, sir, I wait upon you.’

‘Will you not first change your dress?’ said the visitor, seeing with astonishment that the divine proposed to attend him in his plaid nightgown; ‘why, we shall have all the boys in the village after us: you will look like an owl in sunshine, and they will flock round you like so many hedge-sparrows.’

‘I will get my clothes instantly,’ said the worthy clergyman — ‘I will get ready directly. I am really ashamed to keep

you waiting, my dear Mr. — eh — eh — your name has this instant escaped me.'

'It is Touchwood, sir, at your service ; I do not believe you ever heard it before,' answered the traveller.

'True — right — no more I have. Well, my good Mr. Touchstone, will you sit down an instant until we see what we can do ? Strange slaves we make ourselves to these bodies of ours, Mr. Touchstone : the clothing and the sustaining of them costs us much thought and leisure, which might be better employed in catering for the wants of our immortal spirits.'

Mr. Touchwood thought in his heart that never had Bramin or Gymnosophist less reason to reproach himself with excess in the indulgence of the table or of the toilet than the sage before him ; but he assented to the doctrine, as he would have done to any minor heresy, rather than protract matters by farther discussing the point at present. In a short time the minister was dressed in his Sunday's suit, without any farther mistake than turning one of his black stockings inside out ; and Mr. Touchwood, happy as was Boswell when he carried off Dr. Johnson in triumph to dine with Strahan and John Wilkes, had the pleasure of escorting him to the Cleikum Inn.

In the course of the afternoon they became more familiar, and the familiarity led to their forming a considerable estimate of each other's powers and acquirements. It is true, the traveller thought the student too pedantic, too much attached to systems, which, formed in solitude, he was unwilling to renounce, even when contradicted by the voice and testimony of experience ; and, moreover, considered his utter inattention to the quality of what he eat and drank as unworthy of a rational, that is, of a cooking, creature, or of a being who, as defined by Johnson, holds his dinner as the most important business of the day. Cargill did not act up to this definition, and was, therefore, in the eyes of his new acquaintance, so far ignorant and uncivilised. What then ? He was still a sensible, intelligent man, however abstemious and bookish.

On the other hand, the divine could not help regarding his new friend as something of an epicure or belly-god, nor could he observe in him either the perfect education or the polished bearing which mark the gentleman of rank, and of which, while he mingled with the world, he had become a competent judge. Neither did it escape him that in the catalogue of Mr. Touchwood's defects occurred that of many travellers, a slight disposition to exaggerate his own personal adventures,

and to prose concerning his own exploits. But, then, his acquaintance with Eastern manners, existing now in the same state in which they were found during the time of the Crusades, formed a living commentary on the works of William of Tyre, Raymund of St. Giles, the Moslem annals of Abulfaragi, and other historians of the dark period, with which his studies were at present occupied.

A friendship, a companionship at least, was therefore struck up hastily betwixt these two originals; and to the astonishment of the whole parish of St. Ronan's, the minister thereof was seen once more leagued and united with an individual of his species, generally called among them the Cleikum Nabob. Their intercourse sometimes consisted in long walks, which they took in company, traversing, however, as limited a space of ground as if it had been actually roped in for their pedestrian exercise. Their parade was, according to circumstances, a low haugh at the nether end of the ruinous hamlet, or the esplanade in the front of the old castle; and, in either case, the direct longitude of their promenade never exceeded a hundred yards. Sometimes, but rarely, the divine took share of Mr. Touchwood's meal, though less splendidly set forth than when he was first invited to partake of it; for, like the owner of the gold cup in Parnell's *Hermit*, when cured of his ostentation,

Still he welcomed, but with less of cost.

On these occasions, the conversation was not of the regular and compacted nature which passes betwixt men, as they are ordinarily termed, of this world. On the contrary, the one party was often thinking of Saladin and Cœur-de-Lion when the other was haranguing on Hyder Ali and Sir Eyre Coote. Still, however, the one spoke and the other seemed to listen; and, perhaps, the lighter intercourse of society, where amusement is the sole object, can scarcely rest on a safer and more secure basis.

It was on one of the evenings when the learned divine had taken his place at Mr. Touchwood's social board, or rather at Mrs. Dods's—for a cup of excellent tea, the only luxury which Mr. Cargill continued to partake of with some complacence, was the regale before them—that a card was delivered to the Nabob.

'Mr. and Miss Mowbray see company at Shaws Castle on the twentieth current, at two o'clock—a *déjeûner*—dresses in character admitted—a dramatic picture.' 'See company! the

more fools they,' he continued by way of comment. 'See company! — choice phrases are ever commendable, and this piece of pasteboard is to intimate that one may go and meet all the fools of the parish, if they have a mind; in my time they asked the honour, or the pleasure, of a stranger's company. I suppose, by and by, we shall have in this country the ceremonial of a Bedouin's tent, where every ragged hadgi, with his green turban, comes in slap without leave asked, and has his black paw among the rice, with no other apology than "Salam alicum." "Dresses in character — dramatic picture!" what new tomfoolery can that be? But it does not signify. Doctor! I say, doctor! — but he is in the seventh heaven! I say, Mother Dods, you who know all the news — is this the feast that was put off until Miss Mowbray should be better?'

'Troth is it, Maister Touchwood; they are no in the way of giving twa entertainments in one season — no very wise to gie ane maybe, but they ken best.'

'I say, doctor — doctor! Bless his five wits, he is charging the Moslemah with stout King Richard! I say, doctor, do you know anything of these Mowbrays?'

'Nothing extremely particular,' answered Mr. Cargill, after a pause; 'it is an ordinary tale of greatness, which blazes in one century and is extinguished in the next. I think Camden says that Thomas Mowbray, who was grand-marshal of England, succeeded, to that high office, as well as to the dukedom of Norfolk, as grandson of Roger Bigot, in 1301.'

'Pshaw, man, you are back into the 14th century. I mean these Mowbrays of St. Ronan's — now, don't fall asleep again until you have answered my question, and don't look so like a startled hare — I am speaking no treason.'

The clergyman floundered a moment, as is usual with an absent man who is recovering the train of his ideas, or a somnambulist when he is suddenly awakened, and then answered, still with hesitation —

'Mowbray of St. Ronan's! Ha — eh — I know — that is — I did know the family.'

'Here they are going to give a masquerade, a *bal paré*, private theatricals, I think, and what not,' handing him the card.

'I saw something of this a fortnight ago,' said Mr. Cargill; 'indeed, I either had a ticket myself or I saw such a one as that.'

'Are you sure you did not attend the party, doctor?' said the Nabob.

'Who attend — I? You are jesting, Mr. Touchwood.'

'But are you quite positive?' demanded Mr. Touchwood, who had observed, to his infinite amusement, that the learned and abstracted scholar was so conscious of his own peculiarities as never to be very sure on any such subject.

'Positive!' he repeated with embarrassment. 'My memory is so wretched that I never like to be positive; but had I done anything so far out of my usual way, I must have remembered it, one would think — and — I *am* positive I was not there.'

'Neither could you, doctor,' said the Nabob, laughing at the process by which his friend reasoned himself into confidence, 'for it did not take place: it was adjourned, and this is the second invitation; there will be one for you, as you had a card to the former. Come, doctor, you must go. You and I will go together — I as an imaum — I can say my "Bismillah" with any hadgi of them all — you as a cardinal, or what you like best.'

'Who, I? It is unbecoming my station, Mr. Touchwood,' said the clergyman — 'a folly altogether inconsistent with my habits.'

'All the better — you shall change your habits.'

'You had better gang up and see them, Mr. Cargill,' said Mrs. Dods; 'for it's maybe the last sight ye may see of Miss Mowbray; they say she is to be married and off to England ane of thae odd-come-shortlies wi' some of the gowks about the Waal down-bye.'

'Married!' said the clergyman; 'it is impossible!'

'But where's the impossibility, Mr. Cargill, when ye see folk marry every day, and buckle them yoursell into the bargain? Maybe ye think the puir lassie has a bee in her bannet; but ye ken yoursell if naebody but wise folk were to marry, the world wad be ill peopled. I think it's the wise folk that keep single, like yoursell and me, Mr. Cargill. Gude guide us! are ye weel? — will ye taste a drap o' something?'

'Sniff at my ottar of roses,' said Mr. Touchwood; 'the scent would revive the dead. Why, what in the devil's name is the meaning of this? You were quite well just now.'

'A sudden qualm,' said Mr. Cargill, recovering himself.

'Oh! Mr. Cargill,' said Dame Dods, 'this comes of your lang fasts.'

'Right, dame,' subjoined Mr. Touchwood, 'and of breaking them with sour milk and pease bannock; the least morsel of Christian food is rejected by the stomach, just as a small

gentleman refuses the visit of a creditable neighbour, lest he see the nakedness of the land — ha ! ha !

‘And there is really a talk of Miss Mowbray of St. Ronan’s being married ?’ said the clergyman.

‘Troth is there,’ said the dame ; ‘it’s Trotting Nelly’s news ; and though she likes a drappie, I dinna think she would invent a lee or carry ane, at least to me, that am a gude customer.’

‘This must be looked to,’ said Mr. Cargill, as if speaking to himself.

‘In troth, and so it should,’ said Dame Dods ; ‘it’s a sin and a shame if they should employ the tinkling cymbal they ca’ Chatterly, and sic a Presbyterian trumpet as yoursell in the land, Mr. Cargill ; and if ye will take a fule’s advice, ye winna let the multure be ta’en by your ain mill, Mr. Cargill.’

‘True — true, good Mother Dods,’ said the Nabob ; ‘gloves and hatbands are things to be looked after, and Mr. Cargill had better go down to this cursed festivity with me, in order to see after his own interest.’

‘I must speak with the young lady,’ said the clergyman, still in a brown study.

‘Right — right, my boy of black-letter,’ said the Nabob ; ‘with me you shall go, and we’ll bring them to submission to mother church, I warrant you. Why, the idea of being cheated in such a way would scare a santion out of his trance. What dress will you wear ?’

‘My own, to be sure,’ said the divine, starting from his reverie.

‘True, thou art right again ; they may want to knit the knot on the spot, and who would be married by a parson in masquerade ? We go to the entertainment though — it is a done thing.’

The clergyman assented, provided he should receive an invitation ; and as that was found at the manse, he had no excuse for retracting, even if he had seemed to desire one.

CHAPTER XVIII

Fortune's Frolics

Count Basset. We gentlemen, whose carriages run on the four aces, are apt to have a wheel out of order.

The Provoked Husband.

OUR history must now look a little backwards; and although it is rather foreign to our natural style of composition, it must speak more in narrative, and less in dialogue, rather telling what happened than its effects upon the actors. Our purpose, however, is only conditional, for we foresee temptations which may render it difficult for us exactly to keep it.

The arrival of the young Earl of Etherington at the salutiferous fountain of St. Ronan's had produced the strongest sensation, especially as it was joined with the singular accident of the attempt upon his lordship's person, as he took a short cut through the woods on foot, at a distance from his equipage and servants. The gallantry with which he beat off the highwayman was only equal to his generosity; for he declined making any researches after the poor devil, although his lordship had received a severe wound in the scuffle.

Of the 'three black Graces,' as they have been termed by one of the most pleasant companions of our time, Law and Physic hastened to do homage to Lord Etherington, represented by Mr. Meiklewham and Dr. Quackleben; while Divinity, as favourable, though more coy, in the person of the Reverend Mr. Simon Chatterly, stood on tiptoe to offer any service in her power.

For the honourable reason already assigned, his lordship, after thanking Mr. Meiklewham, and hinting that he might have different occasion for his services, declined his offer to search out the delinquent by whom he had been wounded; while to the care of the doctor he subjected the cure of a smart flesh-wound in the arm, together with a slight scratch on the

temple ; and so very genteel was his behaviour on the occasion, that the doctor, in his anxiety for his safety, enjoined him a month's course of the waters, if he would enjoy the comfort of a complete and perfect recovery. Nothing so frequent, he could assure his lordship, as the opening of cicatrised wounds ; and the waters of St. Ronan's spring being, according to Dr. Quackleben, a remedy for all the troubles which flesh is heir to, could not fail to equal those of Barege in facilitating the discharge of all splinters or extraneous matter which a bullet may chance to incorporate with the human frame, to its great annoyance. For he was wont to say, that although he could not declare the waters which he patronised to be an absolute *panpharmakon*, yet he would with word and pen maintain that they possessed the principal virtues of the most celebrated medicinal springs in the known world. In short, the love of Alpheus for Arethusa was a mere jest compared to that which the doctor entertained for his favourite fountain.

The new and noble guest, whose arrival so much illustrated these scenes of convalescence and of gaiety, was not at first seen so much at the ordinary and other places of public resort as had been the hope of the worthy company assembled. His health and his wound proved an excuse for making his visits to the society few and far between.

But when he did appear, his manners and person were infinitely captivating ; and even the carnation-coloured silk handkerchief which suspended his wounded arm, together with the paleness and languor which loss of blood had left on his handsome and open countenance, gave a grace to the whole person which many of the ladies declared irresistible. All contended for his notice, attracted at once by his affability and piqued by the calm and easy nonchalance with which it seemed to be blended. The scheming and selfish Mowbray, the coarse-minded and brutal Sir Bingo, accustomed to consider themselves, and to be considered, as the first men of the party, sunk into comparative insignificance. But chiefly Lady Penelope threw out the captivations of her wit and her literature ; while Lady Binks, trusting to her natural charms, endeavoured equally to attract his notice. The other nymphs of the Spa held a little back, upon the principle of that politeness which, at Continental hunting-parties, affords the first shot at a fine piece of game to the person of the highest rank present ; but the thought throbbed in many a fair bosom that their ladyships might miss their aim in spite of the advantages thus allowed

These alternations, though frequent, did not occupy, after all, many days ; for Mowbray, a friend of all hours, spent much of his time in Lord Etherington's apartment, and these few days were days of battle. In the meantime, as his lordship was now sufficiently recovered to join the party at Shaws Castle, and Miss Mowbray's health being announced as restored, that proposal was renewed, with the addition of a dramatic entertainment, the nature of which we shall afterwards have occasion to explain. Cards were anew issued to all those who had been formerly included in the invitation, and of course to Mr. Touchwood, as formerly a resident at the Well, and now in the neighbourhood ; it being previously agreed among the ladies that a nabob, though sometimes a dingy or damaged commodity, was not to be rashly or unnecessarily neglected. As to the parson, he had been asked, of course, as an old acquaintance of the Mowbray house, not to be left out when the friends of the family were invited on a great scale ; but his habits were well known, and it was no more expected that he would leave his manse on such an occasion than that the kirk should loosen itself from its foundations.

It was after these arrangements had been made that the laird of St. Ronan's suddenly entered Meiklewham's private apartment with looks of exultation. The worthy scribe turned his spectacled nose towards his patron, and holding in one hand the bunch of papers which he had been just perusing, and in the other the tape with which he was about to tie them up again, suspended that operation to await with open eyes and ears the communication of Mowbray.

'I have done him !' he said, exultingly, yet in a tone of voice lowered almost to a whisper — 'capotted his lordship for this bout — doubled my capital, Mick, and something more. Hush, don't interrupt me — we must think of Clara now — she must share the sunshine, should it prove but a blink before a storm. You know, Mick, these two d—d women, Lady Penelope and the Binks, have settled that they will have something like a *bal paré* on this occasion — a sort of theatrical exhibition — and that those who like it shall be dressed in character. I know their meaning : they think Clara has no dress fit for such foolery, and so they hope to eclipse her — Lady Pen with her old-fashioned, ill-set diamonds, and my Lady Binks with the new-fashioned finery which she swopt her character for. But Clara shan't be borne down so, by — ! I got that affected slut, Lady Binks's maid, to tell me what her mistress had set

her mind on, and she is to wear a Grecian habit, forsooth, like one of Will Allan's Eastern subjects. But here's the rub — there is only one shawl for sale in Edinburgh that is worth showing off in, and that is at the Gallery of Fashion. Now, Mick, my friend, that shawl must be had for Clara, with the other trankums of muslin and lace, and so forth, which you will find marked in the paper there. Send instantly and secure it, for, as Lady Binks writes by to-morrow's post, your order can go by to-night's mail. There is a note for £100.'

From a mechanical habit of never refusing anything, Meiklewham readily took the note, but having looked at it through his spectacles, he continued to hold it in his hand as he remonstrated with his patron. 'This is a' very kindly meant, St. Ronan's — very kindly meant, and I wad be the last to say that Miss Clara does not merit respect and kindness at your hand; but I doubt mickle if she wad care a boddle for thae braw things. Ye ken yoursell, she seldom alters her fashions. Od, she thinks her riding-habit dress eneugh for ony company; and if you were ganging by good looks, so it is — if she had a thought mair colour, poor dear.'

'Well — well,' said Mowbray, impatiently, 'let me alone to reconcile a woman and a fine dress.'

'To be sure, ye ken best,' said the writer; 'but, after a', now, wad it no be better to lay by this hundred pound in Tam Turnpenny's, in case the young lady should want it afterhend, just for a sair foot?'

'You are a fool, Mick; what signifies healing a sore foot, when there will be a broken heart in the case? No — no, get the things as I desire you; we will blaze them down for one day at least — perhaps it will be the beginning of a proper dash.'

'Weel — weel, I wish it may be so,' answered Meiklewham; 'but this young earl — hae ye found the weak point? Can ye get a decerniture against him, with expenses? — that is the question.'

'I wish I could answer it,' said Mowbray, thoughtfully. 'Confound the fellow, he is a cut above me in rank and in society too — belongs to the great clubs, and is in with the superlatives and inaccessibles, and all that sort of folk. My training has been a peg lower; but, hang it, there are better dogs bred in the kennel than in the parlour. I am up to him, I think — at least I will soon know, Mick, whether I am or no, and that is always one comfort. Never mind; do you execute my commission, and take care you name no names — I must save my little abigail's reputation.'

These alternations, though frequent, did not occupy, after all, many days; for Mowbray, a friend of all hours, spent much of his time in Lord Etherington's apartment, and these few days were days of battle. In the meantime, as his lordship was now sufficiently recovered to join the party at Shaws Castle, and Miss Mowbray's health being announced as restored, that proposal was renewed, with the addition of a dramatic entertainment, the nature of which we shall afterwards have occasion to explain. Cards were anew issued to all those who had been formerly included in the invitation, and of course to Mr. Touchwood, as formerly a resident at the Well, and now in the neighbourhood; it being previously agreed among the ladies that a nabob, though sometimes a dingy or damaged commodity, was not to be rashly or unnecessarily neglected. As to the parson, he had been asked, of course, as an old acquaintance of the Mowbray house, not to be left out when the friends of the family were invited on a great scale; but his habits were well known, and it was no more expected that he would leave his manse on such an occasion than that the kirk should loosen itself from its foundations.

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They parted, Meiklewham to execute his patron's commission; his patron to bring to the test those hopes the uncertainty of which he could not disguise from his own sagacity.

Trusting to the continuance of his run of luck, Mowbray resolved to bring affairs to a crisis that same evening. Everything seemed in the outset to favour his purpose. They had dined together in Lord Etherington's apartments; his state of health interfered with the circulation of the bottle, and a drizzly autumnal evening rendered walking disagreeable, even had they gone no farther than the private stable where Lord Etherington's horses were kept, under the care of a groom of superior skill. Cards were naturally, almost necessarily, resorted to, as the only alternative for helping away the evening, and piquet was, as formerly, chosen for the game.

Lord Etherington seemed at first indolently careless and indifferent about his play, suffering advantages to escape him of which, in a more attentive state of mind, he could not have failed to avail himself. Mowbray upbraided him with his inattention, and proposed a deeper stake, in order to interest him in the game. The young nobleman complied; and in the course of a few hands the gamesters became both deeply engaged in watching and profiting by the changes of fortune. These were so many, so varied, and so unexpected, that the very souls of the players seemed at length centred in the event of the struggle; and, by dint of doubling stakes, the accumulated sum of a thousand pounds and upwards, upon each side, came to be staked in the issue of the game. So large a risk included all those funds which Mowbray commanded by his sister's kindness, and nearly all his previous winnings, so to him the alternative was victory or ruin. He could not hide his agitation, however desirous to do so. He drank wine to supply himself with courage; he drank water to cool his agitation; and at length bent himself to play with as much care and attention as he felt himself enabled to command.

In the first part of the game their luck appeared tolerably equal, and the play of both befitting gamesters who had dared to place such a sum on the cast. But, as it drew towards a conclusion, fortune altogether deserted him who stood most in need of her favour, and Mowbray, with silent despair, saw his fate depend on a single trick, and that with every odds against him, for Lord Etherington was elder hand. But how can fortune's favour secure any one who is not true to himself? By an infraction of the laws of the game, which could only

have been expected from the veriest bungler that ever touched a card, Lord Etherington called a point without showing it, and, by the ordinary rule, Mowbray was entitled to count his own, and in the course of that and the next hand gained the game and swept the stakes. Lord Etherington showed chagrin and displeasure, and seemed to think that the rigour of the game had been more insisted upon than in courtesy it ought to have been, when men were playing for so small a stake. Mowbray did not understand this logic. 'A thousand pounds,' he said, 'were in his eyes no nutshells; the rules of piquet were insisted on by all but boys and women; and for his part, he had rather not play at all than not play the game.'

'So it would seem, my dear Mowbray,' said the earl; 'for, on my soul, I never saw so disconsolate a visage as thine during that unlucky game; it withdrew all my attention from my hand, and I may safely say your rueful countenance has stood me in a thousand pounds. If I could transfer thy long visage to canvas, I should have both my revenge and my money; for a correct resemblance would be worth not a penny less than the original has cost me.'

'You are welcome to your jest, my lord,' said Mowbray, 'it has been well paid for; and I will serve you in ten thousand at the same rate. What say you?' he proceeded, taking up and shuffling the cards, 'will you do yourself more justice in another game? Revenge, they say, is sweet.'

'I have no appetite for it this evening,' said the earl, gravely; 'if I had, Mowbray, you might come by the worse. I do not *always* call a point without showing it.'

'Your lordship is out of humour with yourself for a blunder that might happen to any man: it was as much my good luck as a good hand would have been, and so fortune he praised!'

'But what if with this fortune had nought to do?' replied Lord Etherington. 'What if, sitting down with an honest fellow and a friend like yourself, Mowbray, a man should rather choose to lose his own money, which he could afford, than to win what it might distress his friend to part with?'

'Supposing a case so far out of supposition, my lord,' answered Mowbray, who felt the question ticklish — 'for, with submission, the allegation is easily made, and is totally incapable of proof — I should say, no one had a right to think for me in such a particular, or to suppose that I played for a higher stake than was convenient.'

'And thus your friend, poor devil,' replied Lord Etherington,

'would lose his money and run the risk of a quarrel into the boot! We will try it another way. Suppose this good-humoured and simple-minded gamester had a favour of the deepest import to ask of his friend, and judged it better to prefer his request to a winner than to a loser?'

'If this applies to me, my lord,' replied Mowbray, 'it is necessary I should learn how I can oblige your lordship.'

'That is a word soon spoken, but so difficult to be recalled, that I am almost tempted to pause; but yet it must be said. Mowbray, you have a sister.'

Mowbray started. 'I have indeed a sister, my lord; but I can conceive no case in which her name can enter with propriety into our present discussion.'

'Again in the menacing mood!' said Lord Etherington, in his former tone; 'now, here is a pretty fellow: he would first cut my throat for having won a thousand pounds from me, and then for offering to make his sister a countess!'

'A countess, my lord!' said Mowbray. 'You are but jesting; you have never even seen Clara Mowbray.'

'Perhaps not—but what then? I may have seen her picture, as Puff says in the *Critic*; or fallen in love with her from rumour; or, to save farther suppositions, as I see they render you impatient, I may be satisfied with knowing that she is a beautiful and accomplished young lady, with a large fortune.'

'What fortune do you mean, my lord?' said Mowbray, recollecting with alarm some claims which, according to Meiklewham's view of the subject, his sister might form upon his property. 'What estate? There is nothing belongs to our family, save these lands of St. Ronan's, or what is left of them; and of these I am, my lord, an undoubted heir of entail in possession.'

'Be it so,' said the earl, 'for I have no claim on your mountain realms here, which are, doubtless,

Renown'd of old
For knights, and squires, and barons bold;

my views respect a much richer, though less romantic, domain—a large manor, hight Nettlewood—house old, but standing in the midst of such glorious oaks—three thousand acres of land, arable, pasture, and woodland, exclusive of the two closes, occupied by Widow Hodge and Goodman Trampclod—manorial rights—mines and minerals—and the devil knows how many good things besides, all lying in the vale of Bever.'

'And what has my sister to do with all this?' asked Mowbray, in great surprise.

'Nothing; but that it belongs to her when she becomes Countess of Etherington.'

'It is, then, your lordship's property already?'

'No, by Jove! nor can it, unless your sister honours me with her approbation of my suit,' replied the earl.

'This is a sorer puzzle than one of Lady Penelope's charades, my lord,' said Mr. Mowbray; 'I must call in the assistance of the Reverend Mr. Chatterly.'

'You shall not need,' said Lord Etherington: 'I will give you the key, but listen to me with patience. You know that we nobles of England, less jealous of our sixteen quarters than those on the Continent, do not take scorn to line our decayed ermines with a little cloth of gold from the city; and my grandfather was lucky enough to get a wealthy wife, with a halting pedigree — rather a singular circumstance, considering that her father was a countryman of yours. She had a brother, however, still more wealthy than herself, and who increased his fortune by continuing to carry on the trade which had first enriched his family. At length he summed up his books, washed his hands of commerce, and retired to Nettlewood to become a gentleman; and here my much respected grand-uncle was seized with the rage of making himself a man of consequence. He tried what marrying a woman of family would do; but he soon found that, whatever advantage his family might derive from his doing so, his own condition was but little illustrated. He next resolved to become a man of family himself. His father had left Scotland when very young, and bore, I blush to say, the vulgar name of Scrogie. This hapless dissyllable my uncle carried in person to the herald office in Scotland; but neither Lyon, nor Marchmont, nor Islay, nor Snodoun, neither herald nor pursuivant, would patronise Scrogie. Scrogie! there could nothing be made out of it; so that my worthy relative had recourse to the surer side of the house, and began to found his dignity on his mother's name of Mowbray. In this he was much more successful, and I believe some sly fellow stole for him a slip from your own family tree, Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's, which, I daresay, you have never missed. At any rate, for his *argent* and *or*, he got a handsome piece of parchment, blazoned with a white lion for Mowbray, to be borne quarterly, with three stunted or scrog-bushes for scrogie, and became thenceforth Mr. Scrogie Mowbray, or rather, as he sub-

scribed himself, Reginald (his former Christian name was Ronald) S. Mowbray. He had a son who most undutifully laughed at all this, refused the honours of the high name of Mowbray, and insisted on retaining his father's original appellation of Scrogie, to the great annoyance of his said father's ears and damage of his temper.'

'Why, faith, betwixt the two,' said Mowbray, 'I own I should have preferred my own name, and I think the old gentleman's taste rather better than the young one's.'

'True; but both were wilful, absurd originals, with a happy obstinacy of temper, whether derived from Mowbray or Scrogie I know not, but which led them so often into opposition, that the offended father, Reginald S. Mowbray, turned his recusant son Scrogie fairly out of doors; and the fellow would have paid for his plebeian spirit with a vengeance, had he not found refuge with a surviving partner of the original Scrogie of all, who still carried on the lucrative branch of traffic by which the family had been first enriched. I mention these particulars to account, in so far as I can, for the singular predicament in which I now find myself placed.'

'Proceed, my lord,' said Mr. Mowbray; 'there is no denying the singularity of your story, and I presume you are quite serious in giving me such an extraordinary detail.'

'Entirely so, upon my honour, and a most serious matter it is, you will presently find. When my worthy uncle, Mr. S. Mowbray — for I will not call him Scrogie even in the grave — paid his debt to nature, everybody concluded he would be found to have disinherited his son, the unfilial Scrogie, and so far everybody was right. But it was also generally believed that he would settle the estate on my father, Lord Etherington, the son of his sister, and therein every one was wrong. For my excellent grand-uncle had pondered with himself that the favoured name of Mowbray would take no advantage, and attain no additional elevation, if his estate of Nettlewood, otherwise called Mowbray Park, should descend to our family without any condition; and with the assistance of a sharp attorney, he settled it on me, then a schoolboy, *on condition* that I should, before attaining the age of twenty-five complete, take unto myself in holy wedlock a young lady of good fame, of the name of Mowbray, and, by preference, of the house of St. Ronan's, should a damsel of that house exist. Now my riddle is read.'

'And a very extraordinary one it is,' replied Mowbray, thoughtfully.

'Confess the truth,' said Lord Etherington, laying his hand on his shoulder; 'you think the story will bear a grain of a scruple of doubt, if not a whole scruple itself?'

'At least, my lord,' answered Mowbray, 'your lordship will allow that, being Miss Mowbray's only near relation and sole guardian, I may, without offence, pause upon a suit for her hand made under such odd circumstances.'

'If you have the least doubt either respecting my rank or fortune, I can give, of course, the most satisfactory references,' said the Earl of Etherington.

'That I can easily believe, my lord,' said Mowbray; 'nor do I in the least fear deception, where detection would be so easy. Your lordship's proceedings towards me, too (with a conscious glance at the bills he still held in his hand), have, I admit, been such as to intimate some such deep cause of interest as you have been pleased to state. But it seems strange that your lordship should have permitted years to glide away without so much as inquiring after the young lady, who, I believe, is the only person, qualified as your grand-uncle's will requires, with whom you can form an alliance. It appears to me that long before now this matter ought to have been investigated; and that, even now, it would have been more natural and more decorous to have at least seen my sister before proposing for her hand.'

'On the first point, my dear Mowbray,' said Lord Etherington, 'I am free to own to you that, without meaning your sister the least affront, I would have got rid of this clause if I could; for every man would fain choose a wife for himself, and I feel no hurry to marry at all. But the rogue lawyers, after taking fees and keeping me in hand for years, have at length roundly told me the clause must be complied with, or Nettlewood must have another master. So I thought it best to come down here in person, in order to address the fair lady; but as accident has hitherto prevented my seeing her, and as I found in her brother a man who understands the world, I hope you will not think the worse of me that I have endeavoured in the outset to make you my friend. Truth is, I shall be twenty-five in the course of a month; and without your favour, and the opportunities which only you can afford me, that seems a short time to woo and win a lady of Miss Mowbray's merit.'

'And what is the alternative if you do not form this proposed alliance, my lord?' said Mowbray.

'The bequest of my grand-uncle lapses,' said the earl, 'and

fair Nettlewood, with its old house, and older oaks, manorial rights, Hodge Trampclod, and all, devolves on a certain cousin-german of mine, whom Heaven of His mercy confound !'

'You have left yourself little time to prevent such an event, my lord,' said Mowbray ; 'but things being as I now see them, you shall have what interest I can give you in the affair. We must stand, however, on more equal terms, my lord. I will condescend so far as to allow it would have been inconvenient for me at this moment to have lost that game, but I cannot in the circumstances think of acting as if I had fairly won it. We must draw stakes, my lord.'

'Not a word of that, if you really mean me kindly, my dear Mowbray. The blunder was a real one, for I was indeed thinking, as you may suppose, on other things than the showing my point. All was fairly lost and won. I hope I shall have opportunities of offering real services, which may perhaps give me some right to your partial regard ; at present we are on equal footing on all sides — perfectly so.'

'If your lordship thinks so ——' said Mowbray ; and then passing rapidly to what he felt he could say with more confidence — 'Indeed, at any rate, no personal obligation to myself could prevent my doing my full duty as guardian to my sister.'

'Unquestionably, I desire nothing else,' replied the Earl of Etherington.

'I must therefore understand that your lordship is quite serious in your proposal ; and that it is not to be withdrawn, even if, upon acquaintance with Miss Mowbray, you should not perhaps think her so deserving of your lordship's attentions as report may have spoken her.'

'Mr. Mowbray,' replied the earl, 'the treaty between you and me shall be as definite as if I were a sovereign prince demanding in marriage the sister of a neighbouring monarch, whom, according to royal etiquette, he neither has seen nor could see. I have been quite frank with you, and I have stated to you that my present motives for entering upon negotiation are not personal, but territorial ; when I know Miss Mowbray I have no doubt they will be otherwise. I have heard she is beautiful.'

'Something of the palest, my lord,' answered Mowbray.

'A fine complexion is the first attraction which is lost in the world of fashion, and that which it is easiest to replace.'

'Dispositions, my lord, may differ,' said Mowbray, 'without faults on either side. I presume your lordship has inquired

into my sister's. She is amiable, accomplished, sensible, and high-spirited ; but yet ——

'I understand you, Mr. Mowbray, and will spare you the pain of speaking out. I have heard Miss Mowbray is in some respects — particular ; to use a broader word — a little whimsical. No matter. She will have the less to learn when she becomes a countess and a woman of fashion.'

'Are you serious, my lord ?' said Mowbray.

'I am ; and I will speak my mind still more plainly. I have good temper and excellent spirits, and can endure a good deal of singularity in those I live with. I have no doubt your sister and I will live happily together. But in case it should prove otherwise, arrangements may be made previously, which will enable us in certain circumstances to live happily apart. My own estate is large, and Nettlewood will bear dividing.'

'Nay, then,' said Mowbray, 'I have little more to say — nothing indeed remains for inquiry, so far as your lordship is concerned. But my sister must have free liberty of choice ; so far as I am concerned, your lordship's suit has my interest.'

'And I trust we may consider it as a done thing ?'

'With Clara's approbation — certainly,' answered Mowbray.

'I trust there is no chance of personal repugnance on the young lady's part ?' said the young peer.

'I anticipate nothing of the kind, my lord,' answered Mowbray, 'as I presume there is no reason for any ; but young ladies will be capricious, and if Clara, after I have done and said all that a brother ought to do, should remain repugnant, there is a point in the exertion of my influence which it would be cruelty to pass.'

The Earl of Etherington walked a turn through the apartment, then paused, and said, in a grave and doubtful tone, 'In the meanwhile, I am bound, and the young lady is free, Mowbray. Is this quite fair ?'

'It is what happens in every case, my lord, where a gentleman proposes for a lady,' answered Mowbray ; 'he must remain, of course, bound by his offer until, within a reasonable time, it is accepted or rejected. It is not my fault that your lordship has declared your wishes to me before ascertaining Clara's inclination. But while as yet the matter is between ourselves, I make you welcome to draw back if you think proper. Clara Mowbray needs not push for a catch-match.'

'Nor do I desire,' said the young nobleman, 'any time to reconsider the resolution which I have confided to you. I am

not in the least fearful that I shall change my mind on seeing your sister, and I am ready to stand by the proposal which I have made to you. If, however, you feel so extremely delicately on my account,' he continued, 'I can see and even converse with Miss Mowbray at this fête of yours without the necessity of being at all presented to her. The character which I have assumed in a manner obliges me to wear a mask.'

'Certainly,' said the laird of St. Ronan's, 'and I am glad, for both our sakes, your lordship thinks of taking a little law upon this occasion.'

'I shall profit nothing by it,' said the earl: 'my doom is fixed before I start. But if this mode of managing the matter will save your conscience, I have no objection to it; it cannot consume much time, which is what I have to look to.'

They then shook hands and parted, without any farther discourse which could interest the reader.

Mowbray was glad to find himself alone, in order to think over what had happened, and to ascertain the state of his own mind, which at present was puzzling even to himself. He could not but feel that much greater advantages of every kind might accrue to himself and his family from the alliance of the wealthy young earl than could have been derived from any share of his spoils which he had proposed to gain by superior address in play or greater skill on the turf. But his pride was hurt when he recollected that he had placed himself entirely in Lord Etherington's power; and the escape from absolute ruin which he had made, solely by the sufferance of his opponent, had nothing in it consolatory to his wounded feelings. He was lowered in his own eyes when he recollected how completely the proposed victim of his ingenuity had seen through his schemes, and only abstained from baffling them entirely, because to do so suited best with his own. There was a shade of suspicion, too, which he could not entirely eradicate from his mind. What occasion had this young nobleman to preface, by the voluntary loss of a brace of thousands, a proposal which must have been acceptable in itself without any such sacrifice? And why should he, after all, have been so eager to secure his accession to the proposed alliance, before he had even seen the lady who was the object of it? However hurried for time, he might have waited the event at least of the entertainment at Shaws Castle, at which Clara was necessarily obliged to make her appearance. Yet such conduct, however unusual, was equally inconsistent with any sinister

intentions ; since the sacrifice of a large sum of money, and the declaration of his views upon a portionless young lady of family, could scarcely be the preface to any unfair practice. So that, upon the whole, Mowbray settled that what was uncommon in the earl's conduct arose from the hasty and eager disposition of a rich young Englishman, to whom money is of little consequence, and who is too headlong in pursuit of the favourite plan of the moment to proceed in the most rational or most ordinary manner. If, however, there should prove anything farther in the matter than he could at present discover, Mowbray promised himself that the utmost circumspection on his part could not fail to discover it, and that in full time to prevent any ill consequences to his sister or himself.

Immersed in such cogitations, he avoided the inquisitive presence of Mr. Meiklewham, who, as usual, had been watching for him to learn how matters were going on ; and although it was now late, he mounted his horse and rode hastily to Shaws Castle. On the way, he deliberated with himself whether to mention to his sister the application which had been made to him, in order to prepare her to receive the young earl as a suitor, favoured with her brother's approbation. 'But no — no — no,' such was the result of his contemplation. 'She might take it into her head that his thoughts were bent less upon having her for a countess than on obtaining possession of his grand-uncle's estate. We must keep quiet,' concluded he, 'until her personal appearance and accomplishments may appear at least to have some influence upon his choice. We must say nothing till this blessed entertainment has been given and received.'

CHAPTER XIX

A Letter

Has he so long held out with me untired,
And stops he now for breath? Well. Be it so.
Richard III.

MOWBRAY had no sooner left the earl's apartment than the latter commenced an epistle to a friend and associate, which we lay before the reader, as best calculated to illustrate the views and motives of the writer. It was addressed to 'Captain Jekyl, of the —— regiment of Guards, at the Green Dragon, Harrowgate,' and was of the following tenor : —

'DEAR HARRY —

'I have expected you here these ten days past, anxiously as ever man was looked for; and have now to charge your absence as high treason to your sworn allegiance. Surely you do not presume, like one of Napoleon's new-made monarchs, to grumble for independence, as if your greatness were of your own making, or as if I had picked you out of the whole of St. James's coffee-house to hold my back-hand for your sake, forsooth, not for my own? Wherefore, lay aside all your own proper business, be it the pursuit of dowagers or the plucking of pigeons, and instantly repair to this place, where I may speedily want your assistance. *May* want it, said I? Why, most negligent of friends and allies, I *have* wanted it already, and that when it might have done me yeoman's service. Know that I have had an affair since I came hither — have got hurt myself, and have nearly shot my friend; and if I had, I might have been hanged for it, for want of Harry Jekyl to bear witness in my favour. I was so far on my road to this place, when, not choosing, for certain reasons, to pass through the old village, I struck by a footpath into the woods which separate it from the new Spa, leaving my carriage and people to go the carriage-

way. I had not walked half a mile when I heard the footsteps of some one behind, and, looking round, what should I behold but the face in the world which I most cordially hate and abhor — I mean that which stands on the shoulders of my right trusty and well-beloved cousin and counsellor, St. Francis! He seemed as much confounded as I was at our unexpected meeting; and it was a minute ere he found breath to demand what I did in Scotland, contrary to my promise, as he was pleased to express it. I retaliated, and charged him with being here, in contradiction to his. He justified, and said he had only come down upon the express information that I was upon my road to St. Ronan's. Now, Harry, how the devil should he have known this hadst thou been quite faithful? for I am sure, to no ear but thine own did I breathe a whisper of my purpose. Next, with the insolent assumption of superiority which he founds on what he calls the rectitude of his purpose, he proposed we should both withdraw from a neighbourhood into which we could bring nothing but wretchedness. I have told you how difficult it is to cope with the calm and resolute manner that the devil gifts him with on such occasions; but I was determined he should not carry the day this time. I saw no chance for it, however, but to put myself into a towering passion, which, thank Heaven, I can always do on short notice. I charged him with having imposed formerly on my youth, and made himself judge of my rights; and I accompanied my defiance with the strongest terms of irony and contempt, as well as with demand of instant satisfaction. I had my travelling pistols with me, *et pour cause*, and, to my surprise, my gentleman was equally provided. For fair play's sake, I made him take one of my pistols — right Kuchenritters — a brace of balls in each, but that circumstance I forgot. I would fain have argued the matter a little longer; but I thought at the time, and think still, that the best arguments which he and I can exchange must come from the point of the sword or the muzzle of the pistol. We fired nearly together, and I think both dropped; I am sure I did, but recovered in a minute, with a damaged arm and a scratch on the temple; it was the last which stunned me — so much for double-loaded pistols. My friend was invisible, and I had nothing for it but to walk to the Spa, bleeding all the way like a calf, and tell a raw-head-and-bloody-bone story about a footpad, which, but for my earldom and my gory locks, no living soul would have believed.

‘Shortly after, when I had been installed in a sick-room, I had the mortification to learn that my own impatience had brought all this mischief upon me, at a moment when I had every chance of getting rid of my friend without trouble, had I but let him go on his own errand ; for it seems he had an appointment that morning with a booby baronet, who is said to be a bullet-slitter, and would perhaps have rid me of St. Francis without any trouble or risk on my part. Meantime, his non-appearance at this rendezvous has placed Master Francis Tyrrel, as he chooses to call himself, in the worst odour possible with the gentry at the Spring, who have denounced him as a coward and no gentleman. What to think of the business myself, I know not ; and I much want your assistance to see what can have become of this fellow, who, like a spectre of ill omen, has so often thwarted and baffled my best plans. My own confinement renders me inactive, though my wound is fast healing. Dead he cannot be ; for, had he been mortally wounded, we should have heard of him somewhere or other : he could not have vanished from the earth like a bubble of the elements. Well and sound he cannot be ; for, besides that I am sure I saw him stagger and drop, firing his pistol as he fell, I know him well enough to swear that, had he not been severely wounded, he would have first pestered me with his accursed presence and assistance, and then walked forward with his usual composure to settle matters with Sir Bingo Binks. No — no — St. Francis is none of those who leave such jobs half finished ; it is but doing him justice to say, he has the devil’s courage to back his own deliberate impertinence. But then, if wounded severely, he must be still in this neighbourhood, and probably in concealment ; this is what I must discover, and I want your assistance in my inquiries among the natives. Haste hither, Harry, as ever you look for good at my hand.

‘A good player, Harry, always studies to make the best of bad cards, and so I have endeavoured to turn my wound to some account ; and it has given me the opportunity to secure *Monsieur le Frère* in my interests. You say very truly, that it is of consequence to me to know the character of this new actor on the disordered scene of my adventures. Know, then, he is that most incongruous of all monsters — a Scotch buck — how far from being buck of the season you may easily judge. Every point of national character is opposed to the pretensions of this luckless race, when they attempt to take on them a

personage which is assumed with so much facility by their brethren of the Isle of Saints. They are a shrewd people, indeed, but so destitute of ease, grace, pliability of manners, and insinuation of address, that they eternally seem to suffer actual misery in their attempts to look gay and careless. Then their pride heads them back at one turn, their poverty at another, their pedantry at a third, their *mauvaise honte* at a fourth; and with so many obstacles to make them bolt off the course, it is positively impossible they should win the plate. No, Harry, it is the grave folk in Old England who have to fear a Caledonian invasion: they will make no conquests in the world of fashion. Excellent bankers the Scots may be, for they are eternally calculating how to add interest to principal; good soldiers, for they are, if not such heroes as they would be thought, as brave, I suppose, as their neighbours, and much more amenable to discipline; lawyers they are born — indeed, every country gentleman is bred one; and their patient and crafty disposition enables them, in other lines, to submit to hardships which other natives could not bear, and avail themselves of advantages which others would let pass under their noses unavailingly. But assuredly Heaven did not form the Caledonian for the gay world; and his efforts at ease, grace, and gaiety resemble only the clumsy gambols of the ass in the fable. Yet the Scot has his sphere too (in his own country only), where the character which he assumes is allowed to pass current. This Mowbray, now — this brother-in-law of mine — might do pretty well at a Northern meeting or the Leith races, where he could give five minutes to the sport of the day, and the next half-hour to county politics or to farming; but it is scarce necessary to tell you, Harry, that this half fellowship will not pass on the better side of the Tweed.

‘Yet, for all I have told you, this trout was not easily tickled; nor should I have made much of him, had he not, in the plenitude of his Northern conceit, entertained that notion of my being a good subject of plunder which you had contrived (blessings on your contriving brain!) to insinuate into him by means of Wolverine. He commenced this hopeful experiment, and, as you must have anticipated, caught a Tartar with a vengeance. Of course, I used my victory only so far as to secure his interest in accomplishing my principal object; and yet, I could see my gentleman’s pride was so much injured in the course of the negotiation, that not all the advantages which the match offered

to his damned family were able entirely to subdue the chagrin arising from his defeat. He did gulp it down, though, and we are friends and allies, for the present at least ; not so cordially so, however, as to induce me to trust him with the whole of the strangely complicated tale. The circumstance of the will it was necessary to communicate, as affording a sufficiently strong reason for urging my suit ; and this partial disclosure enabled me for the present to dispense with farther confidence.

‘You will observe, that I stand by no means secure ; and besides the chance of my cousin’s reappearance—a certain event, unless he is worse than I dare hope for—I have perhaps to expect the fantastic repugnance of Clara herself, or some sulky freak on her brother’s part. In a word—and let it be such a one as conjurers raise the devil with—Harry Jekyl, I *want* you.

‘As well knowing the nature of my friend, I can assure you that his own interest, as well as mine, may be advanced by his coming hither on duty. Here is a blockhead, whom I already mentioned, Sir Bingo Binks, with whom something may be done worth *your* while, though scarce worth *mine*. The baronet is a perfect buzzard, and when I came here he was under Mowbray’s training. But the awkward Scot had plucked half a dozen penfeathers from his wing with so little precaution that the baronet has become frightened and shy, and is now in the act of rebelling against Mowbray, whom he both hates and fears ; the least backing from a knowing hand like you, and the bird becomes your own, feathers and all. Moreover,

By my life,
This Bingo hath a mighty pretty wife.

A lovely woman, Harry—rather plump, and above the middle size—quite your taste—a Juno in beauty, looking with such scorn on her husband, whom she despises and hates, and seeming as if she *could* look so differently on any one whom she might like better, that, on my faith, ’twere sin not to give her occasion. If you please to venture your luck, either with the knight or the lady, you shall have fair play and no interference—that is, provided you appear upon this summons ; for, otherwise, I may be so placed that the affairs of the knight and the lady may fall under my own immediate cognizance. And so, Harry, if you wish to profit by these

hints, you had best make haste, as well for your own concerns as to assist me in mine.

‘Yours, Harry, as you behave yourself,
‘ETHERINGTON.’

Having finished this eloquent and instructive epistle, the young earl demanded the attendance of his own valet, Solmes, whom he charged to put it into the post-office without delay, and with his own hand.

CHAPTER XX

Theatricals

The play's the thing.

Hamlet.

THE important day had now arrived, the arrangement for which had for some time occupied all the conversation and thoughts of the good company at the Well of St. Ronan's. To give it, at the same time, a degree of novelty and consequence, Lady Penelope Penfeather had long since suggested to Mr. Mowbray that the more gifted and accomplished part of the guests might contribute to furnish out entertainment for the rest, by acting a few scenes of some popular drama — an accomplishment in which her self-conceit assured her that she was peculiarly qualified to excel. Mr. Mowbray, who seemed on this occasion to have thrown the reins entirely into her ladyship's hands, made no objection to the plan which she proposed, excepting that the old-fashioned hedges and walks of the garden at Shaws Castle must necessarily serve for stage and scenery, as there was no time to fit up the old hall for the exhibition of the proposed theatricals.¹ But, upon inquiry among the company, this plan was wrecked upon the ordinary shelf, to wit, the difficulty of finding performers who would consent to assume the lower characters of the drama. For the first parts there were candidates more than enough; but most of these were greatly too high-spirited to play the fool, except they were permitted to top the part. Then, amongst the few unambitious underlings who could be coaxed or cajoled to undertake subordinate characters, there were so many bad memories, and short memories, and treacherous memories, that at length the plan was resigned in despair.

A substitute proposed by Lady Penelope was next considered. It was proposed to act what the Italians call a comedy of char-

¹ See Open-air Theatre. Note 8.

acter; that is, not an exact drama, in which the actors deliver what is set down for them by the author, but one in which, the plot having been previously fixed upon, and a few striking scenes adjusted, the actors are expected to supply the dialogue extempore, or, as Petruchio says, from their mother wit. This is an amusement which affords much entertainment in Italy, particularly in the state of Venice, where the characters of their drama have been long since all previously fixed and are handed down by tradition; and this species of drama, though rather belonging to the mask than the theatre, is distinguished by the name of *Commedia dell' Arte*.¹ But the shamefaced character of Britons is still more alien from a species of display where there is a constant and extemporaneous demand for wit, or the sort of ready small-talk which supplies its place, than from the regular exhibitions of the drama, where the author, standing responsible for language and sentiment, leaves to the personators of the scenes only the trouble of finding enunciation and action.

But the ardent and active spirit of Lady Penelope, still athirst after novelty, though baffled in her two first projects, brought forward a third, in which she was more successful. This was the proposal to combine a certain number, at least, of the guests, properly dressed for the occasion, as representing some well-known historical or dramatic characters, in a group, having reference to history or to a scene of the drama. In this representation, which may be called playing a picture, action, even pantomimical action, was not expected; and all that was required of the performers was to throw themselves into such a group as might express a marked and striking point of an easily remembered scene, but where the actors are at a pause, and without either speech or motion. In this species of representation there was no tax, either on the invention or memory of those who might undertake parts; and, what recommended it still farther to the good company, there was no marked difference betwixt the hero and heroine of the group and the less distinguished characters by whom they were attended on the stage; and every one who had confidence in a handsome shape and a becoming dress might hope, though standing in not quite so broad and favourable a light as the principal personages, to draw, nevertheless, a considerable por-

¹ See Mr. William Stewart Rose's very interesting *Letters from the North of Italy*, vol. i. Letter xxx., where this curious subject is treated with the information and precision which distinguish that accomplished author.

tion of attention and applause. This motion, therefore, that the company, or such of them as might choose to appear properly dressed for the occasion, should form themselves into one or more groups, which might be renewed and varied as often as they pleased, was hailed and accepted as a bright idea, which assigned to every one a share of the importance attached to its probable success.

Mowbray, on his side, promised to contrive some arrangement which should separate the actors in this mute drama from the spectators, and enable the former to vary the amusement, by withdrawing themselves from the scene, and again appearing upon it under a different and new combination. This plan of exhibition, where fine clothes and affected attitudes supplied all draughts upon fancy or talent, was highly agreeable to most of the ladies present; and even Lady Binks, whose discontent seemed proof against every effort that could be proposed to soothe it, acquiesced in the project, with perfect indifference indeed, but with something less of sullenness than usual.

It now only remained to rummage the circulating library for some piece of sufficient celebrity to command attention, and which should be at the same time suited to the execution of their project. Bell's *British Theatre*, Miller's *Modern and Ancient Drama*, and about twenty odd volumes, in which stray tragedies and comedies were associated, like the passengers in a mail-coach, without the least attempt at selection or arrangement, were all examined in the course of their researches. But Lady Penelope declared loftily and decidedly for Shakspeare, as the author whose immortal works were fresh in every one's recollection. Shakspeare was therefore chosen, and from his works the *Midsummer Night's Dream* was selected as the play which afforded the greatest variety of characters, and most scope of course for the intended representation. An active competition presently occurred among the greater part of the company for such copies of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, or the volume of Shakspeare containing it, as could be got in the neighbourhood; for, notwithstanding Lady Penelope's declaration that every one who could read had Shakspeare's plays by heart, it appeared that such of his dramas as have not kept possession of the stage were very little known at St. Ronan's, save among those people who are emphatically called readers.

The adjustment of the parts was the first subject of consideration, so soon as those who intended to assume characters had refreshed their recollection on the subject of the piece.



SHAW'S CASTLE (TRAQUAIR HOUSE).
From a painting by George Reid, R.S.A.

Theseus was unanimously assigned to Mowbray, the giver of the entertainment, and therefore justly entitled to represent the Duke of Athens. The costume of an Amazonian crest and plume, a tucked-up vest, and a tight buskin of sky-blue silk, buckled with diamonds, reconciled Lady Binks to the part of Hippolyta. The superior stature of Miss Mowbray to Lady Penelope made it necessary that the former should perform the part of Helena, and her ladyship rest contented with the shrewish character of Hermia. It was resolved to compliment the young Earl of Etherington with the part of Lysander, which, however, his lordship declined, and, preferring comedy to tragedy, refused to appear in any other character than that of the magnanimous Bottom; and he gave them such a humorous specimen of his quality in that part, that all were delighted at once with his condescension in assuming and his skill in performing the presenter of Pyramus.

The part of Egeus was voted to Captain MacTurk, whose obstinacy in refusing to appear in any other than the full Highland garb had nearly disconcerted the whole affair. At length this obstacle was got over, on the authority of Childe Harold,¹ who remarks the similarity betwixt the Highland and Grecian costume, and the company, dispensing with the difference of colour, voted the captain's variegated kilt, of the MacTurk tartan, to be the kirtle of a Grecian mountaineer, Egeus to be an Arnout, and the captain to be Egeus. Chatterly and the painter, walking gentlemen by profession, agreed to walk through the parts of Demetrius and Lysander, the two Athenian lovers; and Mr. Winterblossom, loth and lazy, after many excuses, was bribed by Lady Penelope with an antique, or supposed antique, cameo to play the part of Philostratus, master of the revels, provided his gout would permit him to remain so long upon the turf, which was to be their stage.

Muslin trowsers, adorned with spangles, a voluminous turban of silver gauze, and wings of the same, together with an embroidered slipper, converted at once Miss Digges into Oberon, the King of Shadows, whose sovereign gravity, however, was somewhat indifferently represented by the silly gaiety of miss in her teens, and the uncontrolled delight which she felt in her fine clothes. A younger sister represented Titania; and two or three subordinate elves were selected, among families attending the salutiferous fountain, who were easily persuaded to let their children figure in fine clothes at so

¹ See The Arnauts. Note 9.

juvenile an age, though they shook their head at Miss Digges and her pantaloons, and no less at the liberal display of Lady Binks's right leg with which the Amazonian garb gratified the public of St. Ronan's.

Dr. Quackleben was applied to to play Wall, by the assistance of such a wooden horse, or screen, as clothes are usually dried upon; the old attorney stood for Lion; and the other characters of Bottom's drama were easily found among the unnamed frequenters of the Spring. Dressed rehearsals and so forth went merrily on; all voted there was a play fitted.

But even the doctor's eloquence could not press Mrs. Blower into the scheme, although she was particularly wanted to represent Thisbe.

'Truth is,' she replied, 'I dinna greatly like stage-plays. John Blower, honest man, as sailors are aye for some spree or another, wad take me ance to see ane Mrs. Siddons. I thought we should hae been crushed to death before we gat in — a' my things riven aff my back, forbye the four lily-white shillings that it cost us; and then in came three frightsome carlines wi' besoms, and they wad bewitch a sailor's wife! I was lang enough there; and out I wad be, and out John Blower gat me, but wi' nae sma' fight and fend. My Lady Penelope Penfitter and the great folk may just take it as they like; but in my mind, Dr. Cacklehen, it's a mere blasphemy for folk to gar themselves look otherwise than their Maker made them; and then the changing the name which was given them at baptism is, I think, an awful falling away from our vows; and though Thisby, which I take to be Greek for Tibbie, may be a very good name, yet Margaret was I christened, and Margaret will I die.'

'You mistake the matter entirely, my dear Mrs. Blower,' said the doctor; 'there is nothing serious intended — a mere *placebo* — just a divertisement to cheer the spirits, and assist the effect of the waters: cheerfulness is a great promoter of health.'

'Dinna tell me o' health, Dr. Kittlepin! Can it be for the puir body M'Durk's health to major about in the tartans like a tobacconist's sign in a frosty morning, wi' his poor wizzened houghs as blue as a blawort? Weel I wot he is a humbling spectacle. Or can it gie onybody health or pleasure either to see your ainsell, doctor, ganging about wi' a claise screen tied to your back, covered wi' paper, and painted like a stane and lime wa'? I'll gang to see nane o' their vanities, Dr. Kittlehen;

and if there is nae other decent body to take care o' me, as I dinna like to sit a hail afternoon by mysell, I'll e'en gae doun to Mr. Sowerbrowst the maltster's; he is a pleasant, sensible man, and a sponsibler man in the world, and his sister's a very decent woman.'

'Confound Sowerbrowst,' thought the doctor; 'if I had guessed he was to come across me thus, he should not have got the better of his dyspepsy so early. My dear Mrs. Blower,' he continued, but aloud, 'it is a foolish affair enough, I must confess; but every person of style and fashion at the Well has settled to attend this exhibition: there has been nothing else talked of for this month through the whole country, and it will be a year before it is forgotten. And I would have you consider how ill it will look, my dear Mrs. Blower, to stay away; nobody will believe you had a card — no, not though you were to hang it round your neck like a label round a vial of tincture, Mrs. Blower.'

'If ye thought *that*, Doctor Kickherben,' said the widow, alarmed at the idea of losing cast, 'I wad e'en gang to the show, like other folk; sinful and shameful if it be, let them that make the sin bear the shame. But then I will put on nane of their Popish disguises — me that has lived in North Leith, baith wife and lass, for I shanna say how mony years, and has a character to keep up baith with saint and sinner. And then, wha's to take care of me, since you are gaun to make a lime and stane wa' of yoursell, Dr. Kickinben?'

'My dear Mrs. Blower, if such is your determination, I will not make a wall of myself. Her ladyship must consider my profession — she must understand it is my function to look after my patients, in preference to all the stage-plays in this world; and to attend on a case like yours, Mrs. Blower, it is my duty to sacrifice, were it called for, the whole drama from Shakspeare to O'Keefe.'

On hearing this magnanimous resolution, the widow's heart was greatly cheered; for, in fact, she might probably have considered the doctor's perseverance in the plan, of which she had expressed such high disapprobation, as little less than a symptom of absolute defection from his allegiance. By an accommodation, therefore, which suited both parties, it was settled that the doctor should attend his loving widow to Shaws Castle, without mask or mantle; and that the painted screen should be transferred from Quackleben's back to the broad shoulders of a briefless barrister, well qualified for the

part of Wall, since the composition of his skull might have rivalled in solidity the mortar and stone of the most approved builder.

We must not pause to dilate upon the various labours of body and spirit which preceded the intervening space betwixt the settlement of this gay scheme and the time appointed to carry it into execution. We will not attempt to describe how the wealthy, by letter and by commissioners, urged their researches through the stores of the Gallery of Fashion for specimens of Oriental finery; how they that were scant of diamonds supplied their place with paste and Bristol stones; how the country dealers were driven out of patience by the demand for goods of which they had never before heard the name; and, lastly, how the busy fingers of the more economical damsels twisted handkerchiefs into turbans, and converted petticoats into pantaloons, shaped and sewed, cut and clipped, and spoiled many a decent gown and petticoat to produce something like a Grecian habit. Who can describe the wonders wrought by active needles and scissors, aided by thimbles and thread, upon silver gauze and sprigged muslin, or who can show how, if the fair nymphs of the Spring did not entirely succeed in attaining the desired resemblance to heathen Greeks, they at least contrived to get rid of all similitude to sober Christians?

Neither is it necessary to dwell upon the various schemes of conveyance which were resorted to, in order to transfer the *beau monde* of the Spa to the scene of revelry at Shaws Castle. These were as various as the fortunes and pretensions of the owners, from the lordly curricule, with its outriders, to the humble taxed cart, nay, untaxed cart, which conveyed the personages of lesser rank. For the latter, indeed, the two post-chaises at the inn seemed converted into hourly stages, so often did they come and go between the hotel and the castle—a glad day for the postilions, and a day of martyrdom for the poor post-horses; so seldom is it that every department of any society, however constituted, can be injured or benefited by the same occurrence.

Such, indeed, was the penury of vehicular conveyance, that applications were made in manner most humble even to Meg Dods herself, entreating she would permit her old whiskey to 'ply' (for such might have been the phrase) at St. Ronan's Well, for that day only, and that upon good cause shown. But not for sordid lucre would the undaunted spirit of Meg

compound her feud with her neighbours of the detested Well. 'Her carriage,' she briefly replied, 'was engaged for her ain guest and the minister, and deil anither body's fit should gang intill't. Let every herring hing by its ain head.' And, accordingly, at the duly appointed hour, creaked forth the leathern convenience, in which, carefully screened by the curtain from the gaze of the fry of the village, sat Nabob Touchwood, in the costume of an Indian merchant, or 'shroff,' as they are termed. The clergyman would not, perhaps, have been so punctual, had not a set of notes and messages from his friend at the Cleikum, ever following each other as thick as the papers which decorate the tail of a schoolboy's kite, kept him so continually on the alert from daybreak till noon, that Mr. Touchwood found him completely dressed; and the whiskey was only delayed for about ten minutes before the door of the manse—a space employed by Mr. Cargill in searching for the spectacles which at last were happily discovered upon his own nose.

At length, seated by the side of his new friend, Mr. Cargill arrived safe at Shaws Castle, the gate of which mansion was surrounded by a screaming group of children, so extravagantly delighted at seeing the strange figures to whom each successive carriage gave birth, that even the stern brow and well-known voice of Johnie Tirlsneck, the beadle, though stationed in the court on express purpose, was not equal to the task of controlling them. These noisy intruders, however, who, it was believed, were somewhat favoured by Clara Mowbray, were excluded from the court, which opened before the house, by a couple of grooms or helpers armed with their whips, and could only salute, with their shrill and wondering hailing, the various personages as they passed down a short avenue leading from the exterior gate.

The Cleikum Nabob and the minister were greeted with shouts not the least clamorous; which the former merited by the ease with which he wore the white turban, and the latter by the infrequency of his appearance in public, and both by the singular association of a decent clergyman of the Church of Scotland, in a dress more old-fashioned than could now be produced in the General Assembly, walking arm-in-arm, and seemingly in the most familiar terms, with a Parsee merchant. They stopped a moment at the gate of the courtyard to admire the front of the old mansion, which had been disturbed with so unusual a scene of gaiety.

Shaws Castle, though so named, presented no appearance of defence; and the present edifice had never been designed for more than the accommodation of a peaceful family, having a low, heavy front, loaded with some of that meretricious ornament which, uniting, or rather confounding, the Gothic and Grecian architecture, was much used during the reigns of James VI. of Scotland and his unfortunate son. The court formed a small square, two sides of which were occupied by such buildings as were required for the family, and the third by the stables, the only part to which much attention had been paid, the present Mr. Mowbray having put them into excellent order. The fourth side of the square was shut up by a screen wall, through which a door opened to the avenue; the whole being a kind of structure which may be still found on those old Scottish properties where a rage to render their place 'parkish,' as was at one time the prevailing phrase, has not induced the owners to pull down the venerable and sheltering appendages with which their wiser fathers had screened their mansion, and to lay the whole open to the keen north-east—much after the fashion of a spinster of fifty, who chills herself to gratify the public by an exposure of her thin red elbows and shrivelled neck and bosom.

A double door, thrown hospitably open on the present occasion, admitted the company into a dark and low hall, where Mowbray himself, wearing the under dress of Theseus, but not having yet assumed his ducal cap and robes, stood to receive his guests with due courtesy, and to indicate to each the road allotted to him. Those who were to take a share in the representation of the morning were conducted to an old saloon, destined for a green-room, and which communicated with a series of apartments on the right, hastily fitted with accommodations for arranging and completing their toilet; while others, who took no part in the intended drama, were ushered to the left, into a large, unfurnished, and long disused dining-parlour, where a sashed door opened into the gardens, crossed with yew and holly hedges, still trimmed and clipped by the old grey-headed gardener, upon those principles which a Dutchman thought worthy of commemorating in a didactic poem upon the *ars topiaria*.

A little wilderness, surrounding a beautiful piece of the smoothest turf, and itself bounded by such high hedges as we have described, had been selected as the stage most proper for the exhibition of the intended dramatic picture. It afforded

many facilities ; for a rising bank exactly in front was accommodated with seats for the spectators, who had a complete view of the silvan theatre, the bushes and shrubs having been cleared away, and the place supplied with a temporary screen, which, being withdrawn by the domestics appointed for that purpose, was to serve for the rising of the curtain. A covered trellis, which passed through another part of the garden, and terminated with a private door opening from the right wing of the building, seemed as if it had been planted on purpose for the proposed exhibition, as it served to give the personages of the drama a convenient and secret access from the green-room to the place of representation. Indeed, the *dramatis personæ*, at least those who adopted the management of the matter, were induced, by so much convenience, to extend, in some measure, their original plan ; and instead of one group, as had been at first proposed, they now found themselves able to exhibit to the good company a succession of three or four, selected and arranged from different parts of the drama ; thus giving some duration, as well as some variety, to the entertainment, besides the advantage of separating and contrasting the tragic and the comic scenes.

After wandering about amongst the gardens, which contained little to interest any one, and endeavouring to recognise some characters who, accommodating themselves to the humours of the day, had ventured to appear in the various disguises of ballad-singers, pedlars, shepherds, Highlanders, and so forth, the company began to draw together towards the spot where the seats prepared for them, and the screen drawn in front of the bosky stage, induced them to assemble, and excited expectation, especially as a scroll in front of the esplanade set forth, in the words of the play, 'This green plot shall be our stage, this hawthorn brake our tiring-house, and we will do it in action.' A delay of about ten minutes began to excite some suppressed murmurs of impatience among the audience, when the touch of Gow's fiddle suddenly burst from a neighbouring hedge, behind which he had established his little orchestra. All were of course silent,

As through his dear strathspeys he bore with Highland rage.

And when he changed his strain to an adagio, and suffered his music to die away in the plaintive notes of 'Roslin Castle,' the echoes of the old walls were, after a long slumber, awakened by that enthusiastic burst of applause with which

the Scots usually received and rewarded their country's gifted minstrel.

'He is his father's own son,' said Touchwood to the clergyman, for both had gotten seats near about the centre of the place of audience. 'It is many a long year since I listened to old Neil at Inver, and, to say truth, spent a night with him over pancakes and Athole brose; and I never expected to hear his match again in my lifetime. But stop—the curtain rises.'

The screen was indeed withdrawn, and displayed *Hermia*, *Helena*, and their lovers, in attitudes corresponding to the scene of confusion occasioned by the error of *Puck*.

Messrs. Chatterly and the painter played their parts neither better nor worse than amateur actors in general; and the best that could be said of them was, that they seemed more than half-ashamed of their exotic dresses and of the public gaze.

But against this untimely weakness *Lady Penelope* was guarded by the strong shield of self-conceit. She minced, ambled, and, notwithstanding the slight appearance of her person and the depredations which time had made on a countenance that had never been very much distinguished for beauty, seemed desirous to top the part of the beautiful daughter of *Egeus*. The sullenness which was proper to the character of *Hermia* was much augmented by the discovery that *Miss Mowbray* was so much better dressed than herself—a discovery which she had but recently made, as that young lady had not attended on the regular rehearsals at the Well but once, and then without her stage habit. Her ladyship, however, did not permit this painful sense of inferiority, where she had expected triumph, so far to prevail over her desire of shining as to interrupt materially the manner in which she had settled to represent her portion of the scene. The nature of the exhibition precluded much action, but *Lady Penelope* made amends by such a succession of grimaces as might rival, in variety at least, the singular display which *Garrick* used to call 'going his rounds.' She twisted her poor features into looks of most desperate love towards *Lysander*; into those of wonder and offended pride when she turned them upon *Demetrius*; and finally settled them on *Helena* with the happiest possible imitation of an incensed rival, who feels the impossibility of relieving her swollen heart by tears alone, and is just about to have recourse to her nails.

No contrast could be stronger in looks, demeanour, and figure than that between *Hermia* and *Helena*. In the latter character,

the beautiful form and foreign dress of Miss Mowbray attracted all eyes. She kept her place on the stage as a sentinel does that which his charge assigns him ; for she had previously told her brother that, though she consented, at his importunity, to make part of the exhibition, it was as a piece of the scene, not as an actor, and accordingly a painted figure could scarce be more immovable. The expression of her countenance seemed to be that of deep sorrow and perplexity, belonging to her part, over which wandered at times an air of irony or ridicule, as if she were secretly scorning the whole exhibition, and even herself for condescending to become part of it. Above all, a sense of bashfulness had cast upon her cheek a colour, which, though sufficiently slight, was more than her countenance was used to display ; and when the spectators beheld, in the splendour and grace of a rich Oriental dress, her whom they had hitherto been accustomed to see attired only in the most careless manner, they felt the additional charms of surprise and contrast ; so that the bursts of applause which were vollied towards the stage might be said to be addressed to her alone, and to vie in sincerity with those which have been forced from an audience by the most accomplished performer.

‘Oh, that pair Lady Penelope!’ said honest Mrs. Blower, who, when her scruples against the exhibition were once got over, began to look upon it with particular interest ; ‘I am really sorry for her pair face, for she gars it work like the sails of John Blower’s vesshel in a stiff breeze. Oh, Doctor Cacklehen, dinna ye think she wad need, if it were possible, to rin ower her face wi’ a gusing-iron, just to take the wrunkles out o’t?’

‘Hush—hush! my good dear Mrs. Blower,’ said the doctor. ‘Lady Penelope is a woman of quality, and my patient, and such people always act charmingly ; you must understand there is no hissing at a private theatre. Hem!’

‘Ye may say what ye like, doctor, but there is nae fule like an auld fule. To be sure, if she was as young and beautiful as Miss Mowbray—hegh me, and I didna use to think her sae bonny neither ; but dress—dress makes an unco difference. That shawl o’ hers—I daur say the like o’t was ne’er seen in braid Scotland. It will be real Indian, I’s’e warrant.’

‘Real Indian!’ said Mr. Touchwood, in an accent of disdain, which rather disturbed Mrs. Blower’s equanimity, ‘why, what do you suppose it should be, madam?’

‘I dinna ken, sir,’ said she, edging somewhat nearer the

doctor, not being altogether pleased, as she afterwards allowed, with the outlandish appearance and sharp tone of the traveller; then pulling her own drapery round her shoulders, she added, courageously, 'There are braw shawls made at Paisley, that ye will scarce ken frae foreign.'

'Not know Paisley shawls from Indian, madam?' said Touchwood; 'why, a blind man could tell by the slightest touch of his little finger. Yon shawl, now, is the handsomest I have seen in Britain, and at this distance I can tell it to be a real *tozie*.'

'Cozie may she weel be that wears it,' said Mrs. Blower. 'I declare, now I look on 't again, it's a perfect beauty.'

'It is called *tozie*, ma'am, not *cozie*,' continued the traveller; 'the shroffs at Surat told me in 1801 that it is made out of the inner coat of a goat.'

'Of a sheep, sir, I am thinking ye mean, for goats has nae woo.'

'Not much of it, indeed, madam; but you are to understand they use only the inmost coat; and then their dyes — that *tozie* now will keep its colour while there is a rag of it left: men bequeath them in legacies to their grandchildren.'

'And a very bonny colour it is,' said the dame — 'something like a mouse's back, only a thought redder; I wonder what they ca' that colour.'

'The colour is much admired, madam,' said Touchwood, who was now on a favourite topic; 'the Mussulmans say the colour is betwixt that of an elephant and the breast of the *faughta*.'

'In troth, I am as wise as I was,' said Mrs. Blower.

'The *faughta*, madam, so called by the Moors — for the Hindhus call it *hollah* — is a sort of pigeon, held sacred among the Moslem of India, because they think it dyed its breast in the blood of Ali. But I see they are closing the scene. Mr. Cargill, are you composing your sermon, my good friend, or what can you be thinking of?'

Mr. Cargill had, during the whole scene, remained with his eyes fixed, in intent and anxious, although almost unconscious, gaze upon Clara Mowbray; and when the voice of his companion startled him out of his reverie, he exclaimed, 'Most lovely — most unhappy! yes — I must and will see her!'

'See her!' replied Touchwood, too much accustomed to his friend's singularities to look for much reason or connexion in anything he said or did. 'Why, you shall see her and talk to her too, if that will give you pleasure. They say now,' he con-

tinued, lowering his voice to a whisper, 'that this Mowbray is ruined. I see nothing like it, since he can dress out his sister like a begum. Did you ever see such a splendid shawl?'

'Dearly purchased splendour,' said Mr. Cargill, with a deep sigh; 'I wish that the price be yet fully paid!'

'Very likely not,' said the traveller — 'very likely it's gone to the book; and for the price, I have known a thousand rupees given for such a shawl in the country. But hush — hush, we are to have another tune from Nathaniel — faith, and they are withdrawing the screen. Well, they have some mercy: they do not let us wait long between the acts of their follies at least. I love a quick and rattling fire in these vanities. Folly walking a funeral pace, and clinking her bells to the time of a passing knell, makes sad work indeed.'

A strain of music, beginning slowly and terminating in a light and wild allegro, introduced on the stage those delightful creatures of the richest imagination that ever teemed with wonders, the Oberon and Titania of Shakspeare. The pigmy majesty of the captain of the fairy band had no unapt representative in Miss Digges, whose modesty was not so great an intruder as to prevent her desire to present him in all his dignity, and she moved, conscious of the graceful turn of a pretty ankle, which, encircled with a string of pearls, and clothed in flesh-coloured silk of the most cobweb texture, rose above the crimson sandal. Her jewelled tiara, too, gave dignity to the frown with which the offended King of Shadows greeted his consort, as each entered upon the scene at the head of their several attendants.

The restlessness of the children had been duly considered; and, therefore, their part of the exhibition had been contrived to represent dumb show rather than a stationary picture. The little Queen of Elves was not inferior in action to her moody lord, and repaid, with a look of female impatience and scorn, the haughty air which seemed to express his sullen greeting —

'Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.'

The other children were, as usual, some clever and forward; some loutish and awkward enough; but the gambols of childhood are sure to receive applause, paid, perhaps, with a mixture of pity and envy by those in advanced life; and besides, there were in the company several fond papas and mammas, whose clamorous approbation, though given apparently to the whole

performers, was especially dedicated in their hearts to their own little Jackies and Marias—for Mary, though the prettiest and most classical of Scottish names, is now unknown in the land. The elves, therefore, played their frolics, danced a measure, and vanished with good approbation.

The anti-mask, as it may be called, of Bottom and his company of actors, next appeared on the stage, and a thunder of applause received the young earl, who had, with infinite taste and dexterity, transformed himself into the similitude of an Athenian clown; observing the Grecian costume, yet so judiciously discriminated from the dress of the higher characters, as at once to fix the character of a thick-skinned mechanic on the wearer. Touchwood, in particular, was loud in his approbation, from which the correctness of the costume must be inferred; for that honest gentleman, like many other critics, was indeed not very much distinguished for good taste, but had a capital memory for petty matters of fact; and while the most impressive look or gesture of an actor might have failed to interest him, would have censured most severely the fashion of a sleeve or the colour of a shoe-tie.

But the Earl of Etherington's merits were not confined to his external appearance; for, had his better fortunes failed him, his deserts, like those of Hamlet, might have got him a fellowship in a cry of players. He presented, though in dumb show, the pragmatic conceit of Bottom to the infinite amusement of all present, especially of those who were well acquainted with the original; and when he was 'translated' by Puck, he bore the ass's head, his newly-acquired dignity, with an appearance of conscious greatness which made the metamorphosis, though in itself sufficiently farcical, irresistibly comic. He afterwards displayed the same humour in his frolics with the fairies, and the intercourse which he held with Messrs. Cobweb, Mustard-seed, Pease-blossom, and the rest of Titania's cavaliers, who lost all command of their countenances at the gravity with which he invited them to afford him the luxury of scratching his hairy snout. Mowbray had also found a fitting representative for Puck in a queer-looking, small-eyed boy of the Aultoun of St. Ronan's, with large ears projecting from his head like turrets from a Gothic building. This exotic animal personified the merry and mocking spirit of Hobgoblin with considerable power, so that the group bore some resemblance to the well-known and exquisite delineation of Puck by Sir Joshua in the select collection of the Bard of Memory. It was, how-

ever, the ruin of the St. Ronan's Robin Goodfellow, who did no good afterwards — 'gaed an ill gate,' as Meg Dods said, and 'took on' with a party of strolling players.

The entertainment closed with a grand parade of all the characters that had appeared, during which Mowbray concluded that the young lord himself, unremarked, might have time enough to examine the outward form, at least, of his sister Clara, whom, in the pride of his heart, he could not help considering superior in beauty, dressed as she now was, with every advantage of art, even to the brilliant Amazon, Lady Binks. It is true, Mowbray was not a man to give preference to the intellectual expression of poor Clara's features over the sultana-like beauty of the haughty dame, which promised to an admirer all the vicissitudes that can be expressed by a countenance lovely in every change, and changing as often as an ardent and impetuous disposition, unused to constraint and despising admonition, should please to dictate. Yet, to do him justice, though his preference was perhaps dictated more by fraternal partiality than by purity of taste, he certainly, on the present occasion, felt the full extent of Clara's superiority; and there was a proud smile on his lip as, at the conclusion of the divertisement, he asked the earl how he had been pleased. The rest of the performers had separated, and the young lord remained on the stage, employed in disembarassing himself of his awkward visor, when Mowbray put this question, to which, though general in terms, he naturally gave a particular meaning.

'I could wear my ass's head for ever,' he said, 'on condition my eyes were to be so delightfully employed as they have been during the last scene. Mowbray, your sister is an angel!'

'Have a care that that head-piece of yours has not perverted your taste, my lord,' said Mowbray. 'But why did you wear that disguise on your last appearance? You should, I think, have been uncovered.'

'I am ashamed to answer you,' said the earl; 'but truth is, first impressions are of consequence, and I thought I might do as wisely not to appear before your sister, for the first time, in the character of Bully Bottom.'

'Then you change your dress, my lord, for dinner, if we call our luncheon by that name?' said Mowbray.

'I am going to my room this instant for that very purpose,' replied the earl.

'And I,' said Mowbray, 'must step in front and dismiss the

audience ; for I see they are sitting gaping there, waiting for another scene.'

They parted upon this, and Mowbray, as Duke Theseus, stepped before the screen, and announcing the conclusion of the dramatic pictures which they had had the honour to present before the worshipful company, thanked the spectators for the very favourable reception which they had afforded ; and intimated to them that, if they could amuse themselves by strolling for an hour among the gardens, a bell would summon to the house at the expiry of that time, when some refreshments would wait their acceptance. This annunciation was received with the applause due to the *Amphitryon où l'on dîne* ; and the guests, arising from before the temporary theatre, dispersed through the gardens, which were of some extent, to seek for or create amusement to themselves. The music greatly aided them in this last purpose, and it was not long ere a dozen of couples and upwards were 'tripping it on the light fantastic toe' (I love a phrase that is not hackneyed), to the tune of 'Monymusk.'

Others strolled through the grounds, meeting some quaint disguise at the end of every verdant alley, and communicating to others the surprise and amusement which they themselves were receiving. The scene, from the variety of dresses, the freedom which it gave to the display of humour amongst such as possessed any, and the general disposition to give and receive pleasure, rendered the little masquerade more entertaining than others of the kind for which more ample and magnificent préparations have been made. There was also a singular and pleasing contrast between the fantastic figures who wandered through the gardens and the quiet scene itself, to which the old-clipt hedges, the formal distribution of the ground, and the antiquated appearance of one or two fountains and artificial cascades, in which the naiads had been for the nonce compelled to resume their ancient frolics, gave an appearance of unusual simplicity and seclusion, and which seemed rather to belong to the last than to the present generation.

CHAPTER XXI

Perplexities

For revels, dances, masks, and merry hours,
Fore-run fair Love, strewing his way with flowers.

Love's Labour's Lost.

Worthies, away — the scene begins to cloud.

Ibidem.

MR. TOUCHWOOD and his inseparable friend, Mr. Cargill, wandered on amidst the gay groups we have described, the former censuring with great scorn the frequent attempts which he observed towards an imitation of the costume of the East, and appealing with self-complacence to his own superior representation, as he greeted, in Moorish and in Persic, the several turbaned figures who passed his way; while the clergyman, whose mind seemed to labour with some weighty and important project, looked in every direction for the fair representative of Helena, but in vain. At length he caught a glimpse of the memorable shawl, which had drawn forth so learned a discussion from his companion, and, starting from Touchwood's side with a degree of anxious alertness totally foreign to his usual habits, he endeavoured to join the person by whom it was worn.

'By the Lord,' said his companion, 'the doctor is beside himself! — the parson is mad! — the divine is out of his senses, that is clear; and how the devil can he, who scarce can find his road from the Cleikum to his own manse, venture himself unprotected into such a scene of confusion? He might as well pretend to cross the Atlantic without a pilot. I must push off in chase of him, lest worse come of it.'

But the traveller was prevented from executing his friendly purpose by a sort of crowd which came rushing down the alley, the centre of which was occupied by Captain MacTurk, in the very act of bullying two pseudo-Highlanders for having presumed to lay aside their breeches before they had acquired the

Gaelic language. The sounds of contempt and insult with which the genuine Celt was overwhelming the unfortunate impostors were not, indeed, intelligible otherwise than from the tone and manner of the speaker ; but these intimated so much displeasure, that the plaided forms whose unadvised choice of a disguise had provoked it — two raw lads from a certain great manufacturing town — heartily repented their temerity, and were in the act of seeking for the speediest exit from the gardens ; rather choosing to resign their share of the dinner than to abide the farther consequences that might follow from the displeasure of this Highland termagant.

Touchwood had scarcely extricated himself from this impediment, and again commenced his researches after the clergyman, when his course was once more interrupted by a sort of press-gang, headed by Sir Bingo Binks, who, in order to play his character of a drunken boatswain to the life, seemed certainly drunk enough, however little of a seaman. His cheer sounded more like a view-halloo than a hail, when, with a volley of such oaths as would have blown a whole fleet of the Bethel Union out of the water, he ordered Touchwood 'to come under his lee and be d—d ; for, smash his old timbers, he must go to sea again, for as weatherbeaten a hulk as he was.'

Touchwood answered instantly, 'To sea with all my heart, but not with a landlubber for commander. Harkye, brother, do you know how much of a horse's furniture belongs to a ship ?'

'Come, none of your quizzing, my old buck,' said Sir Bingo. 'What the devil has a ship to do with horse's furniture ? Do you think we belong to the horse-marines ? Ha ! ha ! I think you're matched, brother.'

'Why, you son of a freshwater gudgeon,' replied the traveller, 'that never in your life sailed farther than the Isle of Dogs, do you pretend to play a sailor, and not know the bridle of the bow-line, and the saddle of the boltsprit, and the bit for the cable, and the girth to hoist the rigging, and the whip to serve for small tackle ? There is a trick for you to find out an Abram-man, and save sixpence when he begs of you as a disbanded seaman. Get along with you ! or the constable shall be charged with the whole pressgang to man the workhouse.'

A general laugh arose at the detection of the swaggering boatswain ; and all that the baronet had for it was to sneak off, saying, 'D—n the old quiz, who the devil thought to have heard so much slang from an old muslin nightcap ?'

Touchwood, being now an object of some attention, was followed by two or three stragglers, whom he endeavoured to rid himself of the best way he could, testifying an impatience a little inconsistent with the decorum of his Oriental demeanour, but which arose from his desire to rejoin his companion, and some apprehension of inconvenience which he feared Cargill might sustain during his absence. For, being in fact as good-natured a man as any in the world, Mr. Touchwood was at the same time one of the most conceited, and was very apt to suppose that his presence, advice, and assistance were of the most indispensable consequence to those with whom he lived; and that not only on great emergencies, but even in the most ordinary occurrences of life.

Meantime, Mr. Cargill, whom he sought in vain, was, on his part, anxiously keeping in sight of the beautiful Indian shawl, which served as a flag to announce to him the vessel which he held in chase. At length he approached so close as to say, in an anxious whisper, 'Miss Mowbray — Miss Mowbray, I must speak with you.'

'And what would you have with Miss Mowbray?' said the fair wearer of the beautiful shawl, but without turning round her head.

'I have a secret — an important secret, of which to make you aware; but it is not for this place. Do not turn from me! Your happiness in this, and perhaps in the next, life depends on your listening to me.'

The lady led the way, as if to give him an opportunity of speaking with her more privately, to one of those old-fashioned and deeply-embowered recesses which are commonly found in such gardens as that of Shaws Castle; and, with her shawl wrapped around her head, so as in some degree to conceal her features, she stood before Mr. Cargill in the doubtful light and shadow of a huge platanus tree, which formed the canopy of the arbour, and seemed to await the communication he had promised.

'Report says,' said the clergyman, speaking in an eager and hurried manner, yet with a low voice, and like one desirous of being heard by her whom he addressed, and by no one else — 'report says that you are about to be married.'

'And is report kind enough to say to whom?' answered the lady, with a tone of indifference which seemed to astound her interrogator.

'Young lady,' he answered, with a solemn voice, 'had this

levity been sworn to me, I could never have believed it! Have you forgot the circumstances in which you stand? Have you forgotten that my promise of secrecy, sinful perhaps even in that degree, was but a conditional promise? Or did you think that a being so sequestered as I am was already dead to the world, even while he was walking upon its surface? Know, young lady, that I am indeed dead to the pleasures and the ordinary business of life, but I am even therefore the more alive to its duties.'

'Upon my honour, sir, unless you are pleased to be more explicit, it is impossible for me either to answer or understand you,' said the lady; 'you speak too seriously for a masquerade pleasantry, and yet not clearly enough to make your earnest comprehensible.'

'Is this sullenness, Miss Mowbray,' said the clergyman, with increased animation, 'is it levity, or is it alienation of mind? Even after a fever of the brain we retain a recollection of the causes of our illness. Come, you must and do understand me, when I say that I will not consent to your committing a great crime to attain temporal wealth and rank—no, not to make you an empress. My path is a clear one; and should I hear a whisper breathed of your alliance with this earl, or whatever he may be, rely upon it that I will withdraw the veil, and make your brother, your bridegroom, and the whole world acquainted with the situation in which you stand, and the impossibility of your forming the alliance which you propose to yourself, I am compelled to say, against the laws of God and man.'

'But, sir—sir,' answered the lady, rather eagerly than anxiously, 'you have not yet told me what business you have with my marriage, or what arguments you can bring against it.'

'Madam,' replied Mr. Cargill, 'in your present state of mind, and in such a scene as this, I cannot enter upon a topic for which the season is unfit, and you, I am sorry to say, are totally unprepared. It is enough that you know the grounds on which you stand. At a fitter opportunity, I will, as it is my duty, lay before you the enormity of what you are said to have meditated, with the freedom which becomes one who, however humble, is appointed to explain to his fellow-creatures the laws of his Maker. In the meantime, I am not afraid that you will take any hasty step after such a warning as this.'

So saying, he turned from the lady with that dignity which

a conscious discharge of duty confers, yet, at the same time, with a sense of deep pain, inflicted by the careless levity of her whom he addressed. She did not any longer attempt to detain him, but made her escape from the arbour by one alley, as she heard voices which seemed to approach it from another. The clergyman, who took the opposite direction, met in full encounter a whispering and tittering pair, who seemed, at his sudden appearance, to check their tone of familiarity, and assume an appearance of greater distance towards each other. The lady was no other than the fair Queen of the Amazons, who seemed to have adopted the recent partiality of Titania towards Bully Bottom, being in conference such and so close as we have described with the late representative of the Athenian weaver, whom his recent visit to his chamber had metamorphosed into the more gallant disguise of an ancient Spanish cavalier. He now appeared with cloak and drooping plume, sword, poniard, and guitar, richly dressed at all points, as for a serenade beneath his mistress's window; a silk mask at the breast of his embroidered doublet hung ready to be assumed in case of intrusion, as an appropriate part of the national dress.

It sometimes happened to Mr. Cargill, as we believe it may chance to other men much subject to absence of mind, that, contrary to their wont, and much after the manner of a sun-beam suddenly piercing a deep mist and illuminating one particular object in the landscape, some sudden recollection rushes upon them, and seems to compel them to act under it, as under the influence of complete certainty and conviction. Mr. Cargill had no sooner set eyes on the Spanish cavalier, in whom he neither knew the Earl of Etherington nor recognised Bully Bottom, than with hasty emotion he seized on his reluctant hand, and exclaimed, with a mixture of eagerness and solemnity, 'I rejoice to see you! Heaven has sent you here in its own good time.'

'I thank you, sir,' replied Lord Etherington, very coldly; 'I believe you have the joy of the meeting entirely on your side, as I cannot remember having seen you before.'

'Is not your name Bulmer?' said the clergyman. 'I—I know—I am sometimes apt to make mistakes. But I am sure your name is Bulmer.'

'Not that ever I or my godfathers heard of; my name was Bottom half an hour ago—perhaps that makes the confusion,' answered the earl, with very cold and distant politeness.

'Permit me to pass, sir, that I may attend the lady.'

'Quite unnecessary,' answered Lady Binks; 'I leave you to adjust your mutual recollections with your new old friend, my lord; he seems to have something to say.' So saying, the lady walked on, not perhaps sorry of an opportunity to show apparent indifference for his lordship's society in the presence of one who had surprised them in what might seem a moment of exuberant intimacy.

'You detain me, sir,' said the Earl of Etherington to Mr. Cargill, who, bewildered and uncertain, still kept himself placed so directly before the young nobleman as to make it impossible for him to pass, without absolutely pushing him to one side. 'I must really attend the lady,' he added, making another effort to walk on.

'Young man,' said Mr. Cargill, 'you cannot disguise yourself from me. I am sure — my mind assures me — that you are that very Bulmer whom Heaven hath sent here to prevent crime.'

'And you,' said Lord Etherington, 'whom my mind assures me I never saw in my life, are sent hither by the devil, I think, to create confusion.'

'I beg pardon, sir,' said the clergyman, staggered by the calm and pertinacious denial of the earl — 'I beg pardon if I am in a mistake — that is, if I am *really* in a mistake; but I am not — I am sure I am not! That look — that smile — I am not mistaken. You *are* Valentine Bulmer — the very Valentine Bulmer whom I — but I will not make your private affairs any part of this exposition — enough, you *are* Valentine Bulmer.'

'Valentine — Valentine!' answered Lord Etherington, impatiently. 'I am neither Valentine nor Orson. I wish you good morning, sir.'

'Stay, sir — stay, I charge you,' said the clergyman; 'if you are unwilling to be known yourself, it may be because you have forgotten who I am. Let me name myself as the Reverend Josiah Cargill, minister of St. Ronan's.'

'If you bear a character so venerable, sir,' replied the young nobleman, 'in which, however, I am not in the least interested, I think, when you make your morning draught a little too potent, it might be as well for you to stay at home and sleep it off, before coming into company.'

'In the name of Heaven, young gentleman,' said Mr. Cargill, 'lay aside this untimely and unseemly jesting, and tell me if you be not — as I cannot but still believe you to be — that same youth who, seven years since, left in my deposit

a solemn secret, which if I should unfold to the wrong person, woe would be my own heart and evil the consequences which might ensue !'

'You are very pressing with me, sir,' said the earl ; 'and, in exchange, I will be equally frank with you. I am not the man whom you mistake me for, and you may go seek him where you will. It will be still more lucky for you if you chance to find your own wits in the course of your researches ; for I must tell you plainly, I think they are gone somewhat astray.' So saying, with a gesture expressive of a determined purpose to pass on, Mr. Cargill had no alternative but to make way and suffer him to proceed.

The worthy clergyman stood as if rooted to the ground, and, with his usual habit of thinking aloud, exclaimed to himself, 'My fancy has played me many a bewildering trick, but this is the most extraordinary of them all ! What can this young man think of me ? It must have been my conversation with that unhappy young lady that has made such an impression upon me as to deceive my very eyesight, and causes me to connect with her history the face of the next person that I met. What *must* the stranger think of me ?'

'Why, what every one thinks of thee that knows thee, prophet,' said the friendly voice of Touchwood, accompanying his speech with an awakening slap on the clergyman's shoulder ; 'and that is, that thou art an unfortunate philosopher of Laputa, who has lost his flapper in the throng. Come along ; having me once more by your side, you need fear nothing. Why, now I look at you closer, you look as if you had seen a basilisk — not that there is any such thing, otherwise I must have seen it myself, in the course of my travels. But you seem pale and frightened. What the devil is the matter ?'

'Nothing,' answered the clergyman, 'except that I have even this very moment made an egregious fool of myself.'

'Pooh — pooh, that is nothing to sigh over, prophet. Every man does so at least twice in the four-and-twenty hours,' said Touchwood.

'But I had nearly betrayed to a stranger a secret deeply concerning the honour of an ancient family.'

'That was wrong, doctor,' said Touchwood ; 'take care of that in future ; and, indeed, I would advise you not to speak even to your beadle, Johnie Tirlsneck, until you have assured yourself, by at least three pertinent questions and answers, that you have the said Johnie corporeally and substantially in

presence before you, and that your fancy has not invested some stranger with honest Johnie's singed periwig and thread-bare brown joseph. Come along — come along.'

So saying, he hurried forward the perplexed clergyman, who in vain made all the excuses he could think of in order to effect his escape from the scene of gaiety, in which he was so unexpectedly involved. He pleaded headache; and his friend assured him that a mouthful of food and a glass of wine would mend it. He stated he had business; and Touchwood replied that he could have none but composing his next sermon, and reminded him that it was two days till Sunday. At length, Mr. Cargill confessed that he had some reluctance again to see the stranger on whom he had endeavoured with such pertinacity to fix an acquaintance, which he was now well assured existed only in his own imagination. The traveller treated his scruples with scorn, and said, that guests meeting in this general manner had no more to do with each other than if they were assembled in a caravansary.

'So that you need not say a word to him in the way of apology or otherwise; or, what will be still better, I, who have seen so much of the world, will make the pretty speech for you.' As they spoke, he dragged the divine towards the house, where they were now summoned by the appointed signal, and where the company were assembling in the old saloon already noticed, previous to passing into the dining-room, where the refreshments were prepared. 'Now, doctor,' continued the busy friend of Mr. Cargill, 'let us see which of all these people has been the subject of your blunder. Is it yon animal of a Highlandman, or the impertinent brute that wants to be thought a boatswain? — or which of them all is it? Ay, here they come, two and two, Newgate fashion — the young lord of the manor with old Lady Penelope — does he set up for Ulysses, I wonder? The Earl of Etherington with Lady Bingo; methinks it should have been with Miss Mowbray.'

'The Earl of what, did you say?' quoth the clergyman, anxiously. 'How is it you titled that young man in the Spanish dress?'

'Oho!' said the traveller; 'what, I have discovered the goblin that has scared you! Come along — come along; I will make you acquainted with him.' So saying, he dragged him towards Lord Etherington; and before the divine could make his negative intelligible, the ceremony of introduction had

taken place. 'My Lord Etherington, allow me to present Mr. Cargill, minister of this parish, a learned gentleman, whose head is often in the Holy Land, when his person seems present among his friends. He suffers extremely, my lord, under the sense of mistaking your lordship for the Lord knows who; but when you are acquainted with him, you will find that he can make a hundred stranger mistakes than that, so we hope that your lordship will take no prejudice or offence.'

'There can be no offence taken where no offence is intended,' said Lord Etherington, with much urbanity. 'It is I who ought to beg the reverend gentleman's pardon, for hurrying from him without allowing him to make a complete *éclaircissement*. I beg his pardon for an abruptness which the place and the time—for I was immediately engaged in a lady's service—rendered unavoidable.'

Mr. Cargill gazed on the young nobleman as he pronounced these words, with the easy indifference of one who apologises to an inferior in order to maintain his own character for politeness, but with perfect indifference whether his excuses are or are not held satisfactory. And as the clergyman gazed, the belief which had so strongly clung to him that the Earl of Etherington and young Valentine Bulmer were the same individual person melted away like frostwork before the morning sun, and that so completely, that he marvelled at himself for having ever entertained it. Some strong resemblance of features there must have been to have led him into such a delusion; but the person, the tone, the manner of expression were absolutely different; and his attention being now especially directed towards these particulars, Mr. Cargill was inclined to think the two personages almost totally dissimilar.

The clergyman had now only to make his apology and fall back from the head of the table to some lower seat, which his modesty would have preferred, when he was suddenly seized upon by the Lady Penelope Penfeather, who, detaining him in the most elegant and persuasive manner possible, insisted that they should be introduced to each other by Mr. Mowbray, and that Mr. Cargill should sit beside her at table. She had heard so much of his learning—so much of his excellent character—desired so much to make his acquaintance, that she could not think of losing an opportunity which Mr. Cargill's learned seclusion rendered so very rare; in a word, catching the 'black lion' was the order of the day, and her

ladyship, having trapped her prey, soon sat triumphant with him by her side.

A second separation was thus effected betwixt Touchwood and his friend; for the former, not being included in the invitation, or, indeed, at all noticed by Lady Penelope, was obliged to find room at a lower part of the table, where he excited much surprise by the dexterity with which he despatched boiled rice with chop-sticks.

Mr. Cargill being thus exposed, without a consort, to the fire of Lady Penelope, speedily found it so brisk and incessant as to drive his complaisance, little tried as it had been for many years by small talk, almost to extremity. She began by begging him to draw his chair close, for an instinctive terror of fine ladies had made him keep his distance. At the same time, she hoped 'he was not afraid of her as an Episcopalian; her father had belonged to that communion; for,' she added, with what was intended for an arch smile, 'we were somewhat naughty in the forty-five, as you may have heard; but all that was over, and she was sure Mr. Cargill was too liberal to entertain any dislike or shyness on that score. She could assure him she was far from disliking the Presbyterian form — indeed she had often wished to hear it, where she was sure to be both delighted and edified (here a gracious smile), in the church of St. Ronan's, and hoped to do so whenever Mr. Mowbray had got a stove, which he had ordered from Edinburgh, on purpose to air his pew for her accommodation.'

All this, which was spoken with wreathed smiles and nods, and so much civility as to remind the clergyman of a cup of tea over-sweetened to conceal its want of strength and flavour, required and received no farther answer than an accommodating look and acquiescent bow.

'Ah, Mr. Cargill,' continued the inexhaustible Lady Penelope, 'your profession has so many demands on the heart as well as the understanding — is so much connected with the kindnesses and charities of our nature — with our best and purest feelings, Mr. Cargill! You know what Goldsmith says :

To his duty prompt at every call,
He watch'd, and wept, and felt, and pray'd for all.

And then Dryden has such a picture of a parish priest, so imitable, one would think, did we not hear now and then of some living mortal presuming to emulate its features' (here another insinuating nod and expressive smile).

'Refined himself to soul to curb the sense,
And almost made a sin of abstinence.
Yet had his aspect nothing of severe,
But such a face as promised him sincere ;
Nothing reserved or sullen was to see,
But sweet regard and pleasing sanctity.'

While her ladyship declaimed, the clergyman's wandering eye confessed his absent mind ; his thoughts travelling, perhaps, to accomplish a truce betwixt Saladin and Conrade of Mountserratt, unless they chanced to be occupied with some occurrences of that very day, so that the lady was obliged to recall her indocile auditor with the leading question, 'You are well acquainted with Dryden, of course, Mr. Cargill ?'

'I have not the honour, madam,' said Mr. Cargill, starting from his reverie, and but half understanding the question he replied to.

'Sir !' said the lady in surprise.

'Madam !—my lady !' answered Mr. Cargill, in embarrassment.

'I asked you if you admired Dryden ; but you learned men are so absent, perhaps you thought I said Leyden.'

'A lamp too early quenched, madam,' said Mr. Cargill ; 'I knew him well.'

'And so did I,' eagerly replied the lady of the cerulean buskin ; 'he spoke ten languages. How mortifying to poor me, Mr. Cargill, who could only boast of five ! but I have studied a little since that time. I must have you to help me in my studies, Mr. Cargill—it will be charitable ; but perhaps you are afraid of a female pupil ?'

A thrill, arising from former recollections, passed through poor Cargill's mind with as much acuteness as the pass of a rapier might have done through his body ; and we cannot help remarking, that a forward prater in society, like a busy bustler in a crowd, besides all other general points of annoyance, is eternally rubbing upon some tender point, and galling men's feelings, without knowing or regarding it.

'You must assist me, besides, in my little charities, Mr. Cargill, now that you and I are become so well acquainted. There is that Anne Heggie—I sent her a trifle yesterday, but I am told—I should not mention it, but only one would not have the little they have to bestow lavished on an improper object—I am told she is not quite proper—an unwedded

mother, in short, Mr. Cargill, and it would be especially unbecoming in me to encourage profligacy.'

'I believe, madam,' said the clergyman, gravely, 'the poor woman's distress may justify your ladyship's bounty, even if her conduct has been faulty.'

'O, I am no prude, neither, I assure you, Mr. Cargill,' answered the Lady Penelope. 'I never withdraw my countenance from any one but on the most irrefragable grounds. I could tell you of an intimate friend of my own, whom I have supported against the whole clamour of the people at the Well, because I believe, from the bottom of my soul, she is only thoughtless — nothing in the world but thoughtless. O Mr. Cargill, how can you look across the table so intelligently? — who would have thought it of you? Oh fie, to make such personal applications!'

'Upon my word, madam, I am quite at a loss to comprehend —'

'Oh fie — fie, Mr. Cargill,' throwing in as much censure and surprise as a confidential whisper can convey; 'you looked at my Lady Binks. I know what you think, but you are quite wrong, I assure you — you are entirely wrong. I wish she would not flirt quite so much with that young Lord Etherington though, Mr. Cargill; her situation is particular. Indeed, I believe she wears out his patience; for see he is leaving the room before we sit down — how singular! And then, do you not think it very odd, too, that Miss Mowbray has not come down to us?'

'Miss Mowbray! — what of Miss Mowbray, is she not here?' said Mr. Cargill, starting, and with an expression of interest which he had not yet bestowed on any of her ladyship's liberal communications.

'Ay, poor Miss Mowbray,' said Lady Penelope, lowering her voice and shaking her head, 'she has not appeared; her brother went upstairs a few minutes since, I believe, to bring her down, and so we are all left here to look at each other. How very awkward! But you know Clara Mowbray.'

'I, madam?' said Mr. Cargill, who was now sufficiently attentive. 'I really — I know Miss Mowbray — that is, I knew her some years since; but your ladyship knows she has been long in bad health — uncertain health at least, and I have seen nothing of the young lady for a very long time.'

'I know it, my dear Mr. Cargill — I know it,' continued the Lady Penelope, in the same tone of deep sympathy — 'I know it; and most unhappy surely have been the circumstances that

have separated her from your advice and friendly counsel. All this I am aware of; and to say truth, it has been chiefly on poor Clara's account that I have been giving you the trouble of fixing an acquaintance upon you. You and I together, Mr. Cargill, might do wonders to cure her unhappy state of mind — I am sure we might; that is, if you could bring your mind to repose absolute confidence in me.'

'Has Miss Mowbray desired your ladyship to converse with me upon any subject which interests her?' said the clergyman, with more cautious shrewdness than Lady Penelope had suspected him of possessing. 'I will in that case be happy to hear the nature of her communication; and whatever my poor services can perform, your ladyship may command them.'

'I — I — I cannot just assert,' said her ladyship with hesitation, 'that I have Miss Mowbray's direct instructions to speak to you, Mr. Cargill, upon the present subject. But my affection for the dear girl is so very great — and then, you know, the inconveniences which may arise from this match.'

'From which match, Lady Penelope?' said Mr. Cargill.

'Nay, now, Mr. Cargill, you really carry the privilege of Scotland too far: I have not put a single question to you, but what you have answered by another; let us converse intelligibly for five minutes, if you can but condescend so far.'

'For any length of time which your ladyship may please to command,' said Mr. Cargill, 'provided the subject regard your ladyship's own affairs or mine, could I suppose these last for a moment likely to interest you.'

'Out upon you,' said the lady, laughing affectedly; 'you should really have been a Catholic priest instead of a Presbyterian. What an invaluable father confessor have the fair sex lost in you, Mr. Cargill, and how dexterously you would have evaded any cross-examinations which might have committed your penitents!'

'Your ladyship's raillery is far too severe for me to withstand or reply to,' said Mr. Cargill, bowing with more ease than her ladyship expected; and, retiring gently backward, he extricated himself from a conversation which he began to find somewhat embarrassing.

At that moment a murmur of surprise took place in the apartment, which was just entered by Miss Mowbray, leaning on her brother's arm. The cause of this murmur will be best understood by narrating what had passed betwixt the brother and sister.

CHAPTER XXII

Expostulation

Seek not the feast in these irreverent robes ;
Go to my chamber — put on clothes of mine.

The Taming of the Shrew.

IT was with a mixture of anxiety, vexation, and resentment that Mowbray, just when he had handed Lady Penelope into the apartment where the tables were covered, observed that his sister was absent, and that Lady Binks was hanging on the arm of Lord Etherington, to whose rank it would properly have fallen to escort the lady of the house. An anxious and hasty glance cast through the room ascertained that she was absent, nor could the ladies present give any account of her after she had quitted the gardens, except that Lady Penelope had spoken a few words with her in her own apartment, immediately after the scenic entertainment was concluded.

Thither Mowbray hurried, complaining aloud of his sister's laziness in dressing, but internally hoping that the delay was occasioned by nothing of a more important character.

He hastened upstairs, entered her sitting-room without ceremony, and knocking at the door of her dressing-room, begged her to make haste.

'Here is the whole company impatient,' he said, assuming a tone of pleasantry ; 'and Sir Bingo Binks exclaiming for your presence, that he may be let loose on the cold meat.'

'Paddock calls,' said Clara from within ; 'anon — anon !'

'Nay, it is no jest, Clara,' continued her brother ; 'for here is Lady Penelope miauling like a starved cat !'

'I come — I come, greymalkin,' answered Clara, in the same vein as before, and entered the parlour as she spoke, her finery entirely thrown aside, and dressed in the riding-habit which was her usual and favourite attire.

Her brother was both surprised and offended. 'On my soul,' he said, 'Clara, this is behaving very ill. I indulge you in every freak upon ordinary occasions, but you might surely on this day, of all others, have condescended to appear something like my sister, and a gentlewoman receiving company in her own house.'

'Why, dearest John,' said Clara, 'so that the guests have enough to eat and drink, I cannot conceive why I should concern myself about their finery, or they trouble themselves about my plain clothes.'

'Come — come, Clara, this will not do,' answered Mowbray: 'you must positively go back into your dressing-room and huddle your things on as fast as you can. You cannot go down to the company dressed as you are.'

'I certainly can, and I certainly will, John. I have made a fool of myself once this morning to oblige you, and for the rest of the day I am determined to appear in my own dress; that is, in one which shows I neither belong to the world nor wish to have anything to do with its fashions.'

'By my soul, Clara, I will make you repent this!' said Mowbray, with more violence than he usually exhibited where his sister was concerned.

'You cannot, dear John,' she coolly replied, 'unless by beating me; and that I think you would repent of yourself.'

'I do not know but what it were the best way of managing you,' said Mowbray, muttering between his teeth; but, commanding his violence, he only said aloud, 'I am sure, from long experience, Clara, that your obstinacy will at the long-run beat my anger. Do let us compound the point for once: keep your old habit, since you are so fond of making a sight of yourself, and only throw the shawl round your shoulders; it has been exceedingly admired, and every woman in the house longs to see it closer — they can hardly believe it genuine.'

'Do be a man, Mowbray,' answered his sister; 'meddle with your horse-sheets, and leave shawls alone.'

'Do you be a woman, Clara, and think a little on them, when custom and decency render it necessary. Nay, is it possible? Will you not stir — not oblige me in such a trifle as this?'

'I would indeed if I could,' said Clara; 'but since you must know the truth — do not be angry — I have not the shawl. I have given it away — given it up, perhaps I should say, to the rightful owner. She has promised me something or other in exchange for it, however. I have given it to Lady Penelope.'

'Yes,' answered Mowbray; 'some of the work of her own

fair hands, I suppose, or a couple of her ladyship's drawings, made up into fire-screens. On my word — on my soul, this is too bad ! It is using me too ill, Clara — far too ill. If the thing had been of no value, my giving it to you should have fixed some upon it. Good-even to you ; we will do as well as we can without you.'

'Nay, but, my dear John, stay but a moment,' said Clara, taking his arm as he sullenly turned towards the door ; 'there are but two of us on the earth, do not let us quarrel about a trumpery shawl.'

'Trumpery !' said Mowbray. 'It cost fifty guineas, by G—, which I can but ill spare — trumpery !'

'O, never think of the cost,' said Clara ; 'it was your gift, and that should, I own, have been enough to have made me keep to my death's day the poorest rag of it. But really Lady Penelope looked so very miserable, and twisted her poor face into so many odd expressions of anger and chagrin, that I resigned it to her, and agreed to say she had lent it to me for the performance. I believe she was afraid that I would change my mind, or that you would resume it as a seignorial waif ; for, after she had walked a few turns with it wrapped around her, merely by way of taking possession, she despatched it by a special messenger to her apartment at the Well.'

'She may go to the devil,' said Mowbray, 'for a greedy, unconscionable jade, who has varnished over a selfish, spiteful heart, that is as hard as a flint, with a fine glossing of taste and sensibility !'

'Nay, but, John,' replied his sister, 'she really had something to complain of in the present case. The shawl had been bespoken on her account, or very nearly so — she showed me the tradesman's letter — only some agent of yours had come in between with the ready money, which no tradesman can resist. Ah, John ! I suspect half of your anger is owing to the failure of a plan to mortify poor Lady Pen, and that she has more to complain of than you have. Come — come, you have had the advantage of her in the first display of this fatal piece of finery — if wearing it on my poor shoulders can be called a display — e'en make her welcome to the rest for peace's sake, and let us go down to these good folks, and you shall see how pretty and civil I shall behave.'

Mowbray, a spoiled child, and with all the petted habits of indulgence, was exceedingly fretted at the issue of the scheme which he had formed for mortifying Lady Penelope ; but he

saw at once the necessity of saying nothing more to his sister on the subject. Vengeance he privately muttered against Lady Pen, whom he termed an absolute harpy in blue stockings; unjustly forgetting that in the very important affair at issue he himself had been the first to interfere with and defeat her ladyship's designs on the garment in question.

'But I will blow her,' he said — 'I will blow her ladyship's conduct in the business! She shall not outwit a poor whimsical girl like Clara without hearing it on more sides than one.'

With this Christian and gentlemanlike feeling towards Lady Penelope, he escorted his sister into the eating-room, and led her to her proper place at the head of the table. It was the negligence displayed in her dress which occasioned the murmur of surprise that greeted Clara on her entrance. Mowbray, as he placed his sister in her chair, made her general apology for her late appearance and her riding-habit. 'Some fairies,' he supposed — 'Puck, or such-like tricksy goblin — had been in her wardrobe and carried off whatever was fit for wearing.'

There were answers from every quarter — that it would have been too much to expect Miss Mowbray to dress for their amusement a second time; that nothing she chose to wear could misbecome Miss Mowbray; that she had set like the sun, in her splendid scenic dress, and now rose like the full moon in her ordinary attire (this flight was by the Reverend Mr. Chatterly); and that 'Miss Mowbray, being at hame, had an unco gude right to please hersell'; which last piece of politeness, being at least as much to the purpose as any that had preceded it, was the contribution of honest Mrs. Blower, and was replied to by Miss Mowbray with a particular and most gracious bow.

Mrs. Blower ought to have rested her colloquial fame, as Dr. Johnson would have said, upon a compliment so evidently acceptable, but no one knows where to stop. She thrust her broad, good-natured, delighted countenance forward, and sending her voice from the bottom to the top of the table, like her umquhile husband when calling to his mate during a breeze, wondered 'why Miss Clara Moubrie didna wear that grand shawl she had on at the play-making, and her just sitting upon the wind of a door. Nae doubt it was for fear of the soup, and the butter-boats, and the like; but *she* had three shawls, which she really fand was ane ower mony; if Miss Moubrie had like to wear ane o' them — it was but imitashion,

to be sure, but it wad keep her shouthers as warm as if it were real Indian, and if it were dirtied it was the less matter.'

'Much obliged, Mrs. Blower,' said Mowbray, unable to resist the temptation which this speech offered; 'but my sister is not yet of quality sufficient to entitle her to rob her friends of their shawls.'

Lady Penelope coloured to the eyes, and bitter was the retort that arose to her tongue; but she suppressed it, and nodding to Miss Mowbray in the most friendly way in the world, yet with a very particular expression, she only said, 'So you have told your brother of the little transaction which we have had this morning? *Tu me lo pagherai*. I give you fair warning, take care none of your secrets come into my keeping, that's all.'

Upon what mere trifles do the important events of human life sometimes depend! If Lady Penelope had given way to her first movements of resentment, the probable issue would have been some such half-comic, half-serious skirmish as her ladyship and Mr. Mowbray had often amused the company withal. But revenge which is suppressed and deferred is always most to be dreaded; and to the effects of the deliberate resentment which Lady Penelope cherished upon this trifling occasion must be traced the events which our history has to record. Secretly did she determine to return the shawl, which she had entertained hopes of making her own upon very reasonable terms; and as secretly did she resolve to be revenged both upon brother and sister, conceiving herself already possessed, to a certain degree, of a clue to some part of their family history, which might serve for a foundation on which to raise her projected battery. The ancient offences and emulation of importance of the laird of St. Ronan's, and the superiority which had been given to Clara in the exhibition of the day, combined with the immediate cause of resentment; and it only remained for her to consider how her revenge could be most signally accomplished.

Whilst such thoughts were passing through Lady Penelope's mind, Mowbray was searching with his eyes for the Earl of Etherington, judging that it might be proper, in the course of the entertainment, or before the guests had separated, to make him formally acquainted with his sister, as a preface to the more intimate connexion which must, in prosecution of the plan agreed upon, take place betwixt them. Greatly to his surprise, the young earl was nowhere visible, and the place

which he had occupied by the side of Lady Binks had been quietly appropriated by Winterblossom, as the best and softest chair in the room, and nearest to the head of the table, where the choicest of the entertainment is usually arranged. This honest gentleman, after a few insipid compliments to her ladyship upon her performance as Queen of the Amazons, had betaken himself to the much more interesting occupation of ogling the dishes through the glass which hung suspended at his neck by a gold chain of Maltese workmanship. After looking and wondering for a few seconds, Mowbray addressed himself to the old *beau garçon*, and asked him what had become of Etherington.

'Retreated,' said Winterblossom, 'and left but his compliments to you behind him — a complaint, I think, in his wounded arm. Upon my word, that soup has a most appetising flavour. Lady Penelope, shall I have the honour to help you? No! — nor you, Lady Binks? — you are too cruel! I must comfort myself, like a heathen priest of old, by eating the sacrifice which the deities have scorned to accept of.'

Here he helped himself to the plate of soup which he had in vain offered to the ladies, and transferred the further duty of dispensing it to Mr. Chatterly. 'It is your profession, sir, to propitiate the divinities — ahem!'

'I did not think Lord Etherington would have left us so soon,' said Mowbray; 'but we must do the best we can without his countenance.'

So saying, he assumed his place at the bottom of the table, and did his best to support the character of a hospitable and joyous landlord; while on her part, with much natural grace and delicacy of attention, calculated to set everybody at their ease, his sister presided at the upper end of the board. But the vanishing of Lord Etherington in a manner so sudden and unaccountable, the obvious ill-humour of Lady Penelope, and the steady, though passive, sullenness of Lady Binks, spread among the company a gloom like that produced by an autumnal mist upon a pleasing landscape. The women were low-spirited, dull, nay, peevish, they did not well know why; and the men could not be joyous, though the ready resource of old hock and champagne made some of them talkative. Lady Penelope broke up the party by well-feigned apprehension of the difficulties, nay, dangers, of returning by so rough a road. Lady Binks begged a seat with her ladyship, as Sir Bingo, she said, judging from his devotion to the green flask, was likely to need

their carriage home. From the moment of their departure it became bad tone to remain behind ; and all, as in a retreating army, were eager to be foremost, excepting MacTurk and a few stanch toppers, who, unused to meet with such good cheer every day of their lives, prudently determined to make the most of the opportunity.

We will not dwell on the difficulties attending the transportation of a large company by few carriages, though the delay and disputes thereby occasioned were of course more intolerable than in the morning, for the parties had no longer the hopes of a happy day before them, as a bribe to submit to temporary inconvenience. The impatience of many was so great that, though the evening was raw, they chose to go on foot rather than await the dull routine of the returning carriages ; and as they retired they agreed, with one consent, to throw the blame of whatever inconvenience they might sustain on their host and hostess, who had invited so large a party before getting a shorter and better road made between the Well and Shaws Castle.

‘It would have been so easy to repair the path by the Buckstane !’

And this was all the thanks which Mr. Mowbray received for an entertainment which had cost him so much trouble and expense, and had been looked forward to by the good society at the Well with such impatient expectation.

‘It was an unco pleasant show,’ said the good-natured Mrs. Blower, ‘only it was a pity it was sae tedioussome ; and there was surely an awfu’ waste of gauze and muslin.’

But so well had Dr. Quackleben improved his numerous opportunities, that the good lady was much reconciled to affairs in general by the prospect of coughs, rheumatisms, and other maladies acquired upon the occasion, which were likely to afford that learned gentleman, in whose prosperity she much interested herself, a very profitable harvest.

Mowbray, somewhat addicted to the service of Bacchus, did not find himself freed, by the secession of so large a proportion of the company, from the service of the jolly god, although, upon the present occasion, he could well have dispensed with his orgies. Neither the song, nor the pun, nor the jest had any power to kindle his heavy spirit, mortified as he was by the event of his party being so different from the brilliant consumption which he had anticipated. The guests, stanch boon companions, suffered not, however, their party to flag for want

of the landlord's participation, but continued to drink bottle after bottle, with as little regard for Mr. Mowbray's grave looks as if they had been carousing at the Mowbray Arms instead of the Mowbray mansion-house. Midnight at length released him, when, with an unsteady step, he sought his own apartment; cursing himself and his companions, consigning his own person with all despatch to his bed, and bequeathing those of the company to as many mosses and quagmires as could be found betwixt Shaws Castle and St. Ronan's Well.

CHAPTER XXIII

The Proposal

Oh ! you would be a vestal maid, I warrant,
The bride of Heaven. Come, we may shake your purpose ;
For here I bring in hand a jolly suitor
Hath ta'en degrees in the seven sciences
That ladies love best. He is young and noble,
Handsome and valiant, gay, and rich, and liberal.

The Nun.

THE morning after a debauch is usually one of reflection, even to the most determined boon companion ; and, in the retrospect of the preceding day, the young laird of St. Ronan's saw nothing very consolatory, unless that the excess was not, in the present case, of his own seeking, but had arisen out of the necessary duties of a landlord, or what were considered as such by his companions.

But it was not so much his dizzy recollections of the late carouse which haunted him on awakening as the inexplicability which seemed to shroud the purposes and conduct of his new ally, the Earl of Etherington.

That young nobleman had seen Miss Mowbray, had declared his high satisfaction, had warmly and voluntarily renewed the proposal which he had made ere she was yet known to him ; and yet, far from seeking an opportunity to be introduced to her, he had even left the party abruptly, in order to avoid the necessary intercourse which must there have taken place between them. His lordship's flirtation with Lady Binks had not escaped the attention of the sagacious Mowbray ; her ladyship also had been in a hurry to leave Shaws Castle ; and Mowbray promised to himself to discover the nature of this connexion through Mrs. Gingham, her ladyship's attendant, or otherwise ; vowing deeply at the same time that no peer in the realm should make an affectation of addressing Miss Mowbray a cloak for another and more secret intrigue. But his

doubts on this subject were in great measure removed by the arrival of one of Lord Etherington's grooms with the following letter :—

‘MY DEAR MOWBRAY—

‘You would naturally be surprised at my escape from the table yesterday before you returned to it, or your lovely sister had graced it with her presence. I must confess my folly; and I may do so the more boldly, for, as the footing on which I first opened this treaty was not a very romantic one, you will scarce suspect me of wishing to render it such. But I did in reality feel, during the whole of yesterday, a reluctance which I cannot express to be presented to the lady on whose favour the happiness of my future life is to depend, upon such a public occasion and in the presence of so promiscuous a company. I had my mask, indeed, to wear while in the promenade, but, of course, that was to be laid aside at table, and, consequently, I must have gone through the ceremony of introduction—a most interesting moment, which I was desirous to defer till a fitter season. I trust you will permit me to call upon you at Shaws Castle this morning, in the hope—the anxious hope—of being allowed to pay my duty to Miss Mowbray, and apologise for not waiting upon her yesterday. I expect your answer with the utmost impatience, being always yours, etc. etc. etc.

‘ETHERINGTON.’

‘This,’ said St. Ronan’s to himself, as he folded up the letter deliberately, after having twice read it over, ‘seems all fair and above-board: I could not wish anything more explicit; and, moreover, it puts into black and white, as old Mick would say, what only rested before on our private conversation. An especial cure for the headache, such a billet as this in a morning.’

So saying, he sat him down and wrote an answer, expressing the pleasure he should have in seeing his lordship as soon as he thought proper. He watched even the departure of the groom, and beheld him gallop off with the speed of one who knows that his quick return was expected by an impatient master.

Mowbray remained for a few minutes by himself, and reflected with delight upon the probable consequences of this match: the advancement of his sister, and, above all, the various advantages which must necessarily accrue to himself, by so close an alliance with one whom he had good reason to think

deep *in the secret*, and capable of rendering him the most material assistance in his speculations on the turf and in the sporting world. He then sent a servant to let Miss Mowbray know that he intended to breakfast with her.

'I suppose, John,' said Clara, as her brother entered the apartment, 'you are glad of a weaker cup this morning than those you were drinking last night: you were carousing till after the first cock.'

'Yes,' said Mowbray, 'that sandbed, old MacTurk, upon whom whole hogsheads make no impression, did make a bad boy of me; but the day is over, and they will scarce catch me in such another scrape. What did you think of the masks?'

'Supported as well,' said Clara, 'as such folk support the disguise of gentlemen and ladies during life; and that is, with a great deal of bustle and very little propriety.'

'I saw only one good mask there, and that was a Spaniard,' said her brother.

'O, I saw him too,' answered Clara; 'but he wore his visor on. An old Indian merchant, or some such thing, seemed to me a better character; the Spaniard did nothing but stalk about and twangle his guitar, for the amusement of my Lady Binks, as I think.'

'He is a very clever fellow, though, that same Spaniard,' rejoined Mowbray. 'Can you guess who he is?'

'No, indeed; nor shall I take the trouble of trying. To set to guessing about it were as bad as seeing the whole mummery over again.'

'Well,' replied her brother, 'you will allow one thing at least: Bottom was well acted, you cannot deny that.'

'Yes,' replied Clara, 'that worthy really deserved to wear his ass's head to the end of the chapter; but what of him?'

'Only conceive that he should be the very same person with that handsome Spaniard,' replied Mowbray.

'Then there is one fool fewer than I thought there was,' replied Clara, with the greatest indifference.

Her brother bit his lip.

'Clara,' he said, 'I believe you are an excellent good girl, and clever to boot, but pray do not set up for wit and oddity: there is nothing in life so intolerable as pretending to think differently from other people. That gentleman was the Earl of Etherington.'

This annunciation, though made in what was meant to be an imposing tone, had no impression on Clara.

'I hope he plays the peer better than the fidalgo,' she replied, carelessly.

'Yes,' answered Mowbray, 'he is one of the handsomest men of the time, and decidedly fashionable; you will like him much when you see him in private.'

'It is of little consequence whether I do or no,' answered Clara.

'You mistake the matter,' said Mowbray, gravely; 'it may be of considerable consequence.'

'Indeed!' said Clara, with a smile; 'I must suppose myself, then, too important a person not to make my approbation necessary to one of your first-rates. He cannot pretend to pass muster at St. Ronan's without it. Well, I will depute my authority to Lady Binks, and she shall pass your new recruits instead of me.'

'This is all nonsense, Clara,' said Mowbray. 'Lord Etherington calls here this very morning, and wishes to be made known to you. I expect you will receive him as a particular friend of mine.'

'With all my heart, so you will engage, after this visit, to keep him down with your other particular friends at the Well: you know it is a bargain that you bring neither buck nor pointer into my parlour — the one worries my cat and the other my temper.'

'You mistake me entirely, Clara: this is a very different visitor from any I have ever introduced to you; I expect to see him often here, and I hope you and he will be better friends than you think of. I have more reasons for wishing this than I have now time to tell you.'

Clara remained silent for an instant, then looked at her brother with an anxious and scrutinising glance, as if she wished to penetrate into his inmost purpose.

'If I thought,' she said, after a minute's consideration, and with an altered and disturbed tone; 'but no — I will not think that Heaven intends me such a blow — least of all, that it should come from your hands.' She walked hastily to the window and threw it open, then shut it again, and returned to her seat, saying, with a constrained smile, 'May Heaven forgive you, brother, but you frightened me heartily.'

'I did not mean to do so, Clara,' said Mowbray, who saw the necessity of soothing her; 'I only alluded in joke to those chances that are never out of other girls' heads, though you never seem to calculate on them.'

'I wish you, my dear John,' said Clara, struggling to regain entire composure — 'I wish *you* would profit by my example, and give up the science of chance also ; it will not avail you.'

'How d'ye know that ? I'll show you the contrary, you silly wench,' answered Mowbray. 'Here is a banker's bill, payable to your own order, for the cash you lent me, and something over ; don't let old Mick have the fingering, but let Bindloose manage it for you, he is the honestest man between two d—d knaves.'

'Will not you, brother, send it to the man Bindloose yourself ?'

'No — no,' replied Mowbray ; 'he might confuse it with some of my transactions, and so you forfeit your stake.'

'Well, I am glad you are able to pay me, for I want to buy Campbell's new work.'

'I wish you joy of your purchase ; but don't scratch me for not caring about it — I know as little of books as you of the long odds. And come now, be serious, and tell me if you will be a good girl, lay aside your whims, and receive this English young nobleman like a lady as you are ?'

'That were easy,' said Clara ; 'but — but ——— Pray, ask no more of me than just to see him. Say to him at once, I am a poor creature in body, in mind, in spirits, in temper, in understanding — above all, say that I can receive him only once.'

'I shall say no such thing,' said Mowbray, bluntly. 'It is good to be plain with you at once ; I thought of putting off this discussion, but since it must come, the sooner it is over the better. You are to understand, Clara Mowbray, that Lord Etherington has a particular view in this visit, and that his view has my full sanction and approbation.'

'I thought so,' said Clara, in the same altered tone of voice in which she had before spoken — 'my mind foreboded this last of misfortunes ! But, Mowbray, you have no child before you. I neither will nor can see this nobleman.'

'How !' exclaimed Mowbray, fiercely ; 'do you dare return me so peremptory an answer ? Think better of it, for, if we differ, you will find you will have the worst of the game.'

'Rely upon it,' she continued, with more vehemence, 'I will see him nor no man upon the footing you mention : my resolution is taken, and threats and entreaties will prove equally unavailing.'

'Upon my word, madam,' said Mowbray, 'you have, for a modest and retired young lady, plucked up a goodly spirit of

your own! But you shall find mine equals it. If you do not agree to see my friend Lord Etherington, ay, and to receive him with the politeness due to the consideration I entertain for him, by Heaven! Clara, I will no longer regard you as my father's daughter. Think what you are giving up—the affection and protection of a brother—and for what? merely for an idle point of etiquette. You cannot, I suppose, even in the workings of your romantic brain, imagine that the days of Clarissa Harlowe and Harriet Byron are come back again, when women were married by main force? and it is monstrous vanity in you to suppose that Lord Etherington, since he has honoured you with any thoughts at all, will not be satisfied with a proper and civil refusal. You are no such prize, methinks, that the days of romance are to come back for you.'

'I care not what days they are,' said Clara; 'I tell you I will not see Lord Etherington, or any one else, upon such preliminaries as you have stated. I cannot—I will not—and I ought not. Had you meant me to receive him, which can be a matter of no consequence whatever, you should have left him on the footing of an ordinary visitor; as it is, I will not see him.'

'You *shall* see and hear him both,' said Mowbray: 'you shall find me as obstinate as you are—as willing to forget I am a brother as you to forget that you have one.'

'It is time, then,' replied Clara, 'that this house, once our father's, should no longer hold us both. I can provide for myself, and may God bless you!'

'You take it coolly, madam,' said her brother, walking through the apartment with much anxiety both of look and gesture.

'I do,' she answered, 'for it is what I have often foreseen. Yes, brother, I have often foreseen that you would make your sister the subject of your plots and schemes, so soon as other stakes failed you. That hour is come, and I am, as you see, prepared to meet it.'

'And where may you propose to retire to?' said Mowbray. 'I think that I, your only relation and natural guardian, have a right to know that; my honour and that of my family is concerned.'

'Your honour!' she retorted, with a keen glance at him; 'your interest, I suppose you mean, is somehow connected with the place of my abode. But keep yourself patient; the den of the rock, the linn of the brook, should be my choice, rather than a palace without my freedom.'

'You are mistaken, however,' said Mowbray, sternly, 'if you hope to enjoy more freedom than I think you capable of making a good use of. The law authorises, and reason, and even affection, require, that you should be put under restraint for your own safety and that of your character. You roamed the woods a little too much in my father's time, if all stories be true.'

'I did — I did indeed, Mowbray,' said Clara, weeping; 'God pity me, and forgive you for upbraiding me with my state of mind. I know I cannot sometimes trust my own judgment; but is it for you to remind me of this?'

Mowbray was at once softened and embarrassed.

'What folly is this?' he said. 'You say the most cutting things to me — are ready to fly from my house — and when I am provoked to make an angry answer, you burst into tears!'

'Say you did not mean what you said, my dearest brother!' exclaimed Clara — 'O say you did not mean it! Do not take my liberty from me; it is all I have left, and, God knows, it is a poor comfort in the sorrows I undergo. I will put a fair face on everything — will go down to the Well — will wear what you please, and say what you please — but O! leave me the liberty of my solitude here; let me weep alone in the house of my father, and do not force a broken-hearted sister to lay her death at your door. My span must be a brief one, but let not your hand shake the sand-glass! Disturb me not — let me pass quietly; I do not ask this so much for my sake as for your own. I would have you think of me sometimes, Mowbray, after I am gone, and without the bitter reflections which the recollection of harsh usage will assuredly bring with it. Pity me, were it but for your own sake. I have deserved nothing but compassion at your hand. There are but two of us on earth, why should we make each other miserable?'

She accompanied these entreaties with a flood of tears and the most heart-bursting sobs. Mowbray knew not what to determine. On the one hand, he was bound by his promise to the earl; on the other, his sister was in no condition to receive such a visitor; nay, it was most probable that, if he adopted the strong measure of compelling her to receive him, her behaviour would probably be such as totally to break off the projected match, on the success of which he had founded so many castles in the air. In this dilemma, he had again recourse to argument.

'Clara,' he said, 'I am, as I have repeatedly said, your only relation and guardian; if there be any real reason why you

ought not to receive, and, at least, make a civil reply to, such a negotiation as the Earl of Etherington has thought fit to open, surely I ought to be entrusted with it. You enjoyed far too much of that liberty which you seem to prize so highly during my father's lifetime — in the last years of it at least; have you formed any foolish attachment during that time, which now prevents you from receiving such a visit as Lord Etherington has threatened?’

‘Threatened! the expression is well chosen,’ said Miss Mowbray; ‘and nothing can be more dreadful than such a threat, excepting its accomplishment.’

‘I am glad your spirits are reviving,’ replied her brother; ‘but that is no answer to my question.’

‘Is it necessary,’ said Clara, ‘that one must have actually some engagement or entanglement to make them unwilling to be given in marriage, or even to be pestered upon such a subject? Many young men declare they intend to die bachelors, why may not I be permitted to commence old maid at three-and-twenty? Let me do so, like a kind brother, and there were never nephews and nieces so petted and so scolded, so nursed and so cuffed, by a maiden aunt, as your children, when you have them, shall be by aunt Clara.’

‘And why not say all this to Lord Etherington?’ said Mowbray. ‘Wait until he proposes such a terrible bugbear as matrimony, before you refuse to receive him. Who knows, the whim that he hinted at may have passed away: he was, as you say, flirting with Lady Binks, and her ladyship has a good deal of address, as well as beauty.’

‘Heaven improve both — in an honest way — if she will but keep his lordship to herself!’ said Clara.

‘Well, then,’ continued her brother, ‘things standing thus, I do not think you will have much trouble with his lordship — no more, perhaps, than just to give him a civil denial. After having spoken on such a subject to a man of my condition, he cannot well break off without you give him an apology.’

‘If that is all,’ said Clara, ‘he shall, as soon as he gives me an opportunity, receive such an answer as will leave him at liberty to woo any one whatsoever of Eve’s daughters, excepting Clara Mowbray. Methinks I am so eager to set the captive free, that I now wish as much for his lordship’s appearance as I feared it a little while since.’

‘Nay — nay, but let us go fair and softly,’ said her brother. ‘You are not to refuse him before he asks the question.’

'Certainly,' said Clara; 'but I well know how to manage that: he shall never ask the question at all. I will restore Lady Binks's admirer, without accepting so much as a civility in ransom.'

'Worse and worse, Clara,' answered Mowbray; 'you are to remember he is my friend and guest, and he must not be affronted in my house. Leave things to themselves. Besides, consider an instant, Clara - had you not better take a little time for reflection in this case? The offer is a splendid one - title, fortune, and, what is more, a fortune which you will be well entitled to share largely in.'

'This is beyond our implied treaty,' said Clara. 'I have yielded more than ever I thought I should have done, when I agreed that this earl should be introduced to me on the footing of a common visitor; and now you talk favourably of his pretensions. This is an encroachment, Mowbray, and now I shall relapse into my obstinacy and refuse to see him at all.'

'Do as you will,' replied Mowbray, sensible that it was only by working on her affections that he had any chance of carrying a point against her inclination - 'do as you will, my dear Clara; but, for Heaven's sake, wipe your eyes.'

'And behave myself,' said she, trying to smile as she obeyed him - 'behave myself, you would say, like folks of this world; but the quotation is lost on you, who never read either Prior or Shakspeare.'

'I thank Heaven for that,' said Mowbray. 'I have enough to burden my brain, without carrying such a lumber of rhymes in it as you and Lady Pen do. Come, that is right; go to the mirror and make yourself decent.'

A woman must be much borne down indeed by pain and suffering when she loses all respect for her external appearance. The madwoman in Bedlam wears her garland of straw with a certain air of pretension; and we have seen a widow whom we knew to be most sincerely affected by a recent deprivation, whose weeds, nevertheless, were arranged with a dolorous degree of grace which amounted almost to coquetry. Clara Mowbray had also, negligent as she seemed to be of appearances, her own art of the toilet, although of the most rapid and most simple character. She took off her little riding-hat, and, unbinding a lace of Indian gold which retained her locks, shook them in dark and glossy profusion over her very handsome form, which they overshadowed down to her slender waist; and while her brother stood looking on her with

a mixture of pride, affection, and compassion, she arranged them with a large comb, and, without the assistance of any *femme d'atours*, wove them, in the course of a few minutes, into such a natural head-dress as we see on the statues of the Grecian nymphs.

'Now, let me but find my best muff,' she said, 'come prince and peer, I shall be ready to receive them.'

'Pshaw! your muff—who has heard of such a thing these twenty years? Muffs were out of fashion before you were born.'

'No matter, John,' replied his sister; 'when a woman wears a muff, especially a determined old maid like myself, it is a sign she has no intentions to scratch; and therefore the muff serves all the purposes of a white flag, and prevents the necessity of drawing on a glove, so prudentially recommended by the motto of our cousins, the M'Intoshes.'¹

'Be it as you will, then,' said Mowbray; 'for other than you do will it, you will not suffer it to be. But how is this—another billet? We are in request this morning.'

'Now, Heaven send his lordship may have judiciously considered all the risks which he is sure to encounter on this charmed ground, and resolved to leave his adventure unattempted,' said Miss Mowbray.

Her brother glanced a look of displeasure at her, as he broke the seal of the letter, which was addressed to him with the words, 'Haste and secrecy,' written on the envelope. The contents, which greatly surprised him, we remit to the commencement of the next chapter.

¹ The well-known crest of this ancient race is a cat rampant, with a motto bearing the caution—'Touch not the cat, but (*i. e.* be out, or without) the glove.'

CHAPTER XXIV

Private Information

Ope this letter ;
I can produce a champion that will prove
What is avouched there.

King Lear.

THE billet which Mowbray received, and read in his sister's presence, contained these words : —

‘SIR —

‘Clara Mowbray has few friends — none, perhaps, excepting yourself, in right of blood, and the writer of this letter, by right of the fondest, truest, and most disinterested attachment that ever man bore to woman. I am thus explicit with you, because, though it is unlikely that I should ever again see or speak to your sister, I am desirous that you should be clearly acquainted with the cause of that interest which I must always, even to my dying breath, take in her affairs.

‘The person calling himself Lord Etherington is, I am aware, in the neighbourhood of Shaws Castle, with the intention of paying his addresses to Miss Mowbray ; and it is easy for me to foresee, arguing according to the ordinary views of mankind, that he may place his proposals in such a light as may make them seem highly desirable. But ere you give this person the encouragement which his offers may seem to deserve, please to inquire whether his fortune is certain or his rank indisputable ; and be not satisfied with light evidence on either point. A man may be in possession of an estate and title to which he has no better right than his own rapacity and forwardness of assumption ; and supposing Mr. Mowbray jealous, as he must be, of the honour of his family, the alliance of such a one cannot but bring disgrace. This comes from one who will make good what he has written.’

On the first perusal of a billet so extraordinary, Mowbray was inclined to set it down to the malice of some of the people at the Well, anonymous letters being no uncommon resource of the small wits who frequent such places of general resort, as a species of deception safely and easily executed, and well calculated to produce much mischief and confusion. But upon closer consideration he was shaken in this opinion, and, starting suddenly from the reverie into which he had fallen, asked for the messenger who had brought the letter. 'He was in the hall,' the servant thought, and Mowbray ran to the hall. No, the messenger was not there, but Mowbray might see his back as he walked up the avenue. He hallooed, no answer was returned; he ran after the fellow, whose appearance was that of a countryman. The man quickened his pace as he saw himself pursued, and when he got out of the avenue, threw himself into one of the numerous bye-paths which wanderers, who strayed in quest of nuts or for the sake of exercise, had made in various directions through the extensive copse which surrounded the castle, and were doubtless the reason of its acquiring the name of Shaws, which signifies, in the Scottish dialect, a wood of this description.

Irritated by the man's obvious desire to avoid him, and naturally obstinate in all his resolutions, Mowbray pursued for a considerable way, until he fairly lost breath; and the flier having been long out of sight, he recollected at length that his engagement with the Earl of Etherington required his attendance at the castle.

The young lord, indeed, had arrived at Shaws Castle so few minutes after Mowbray's departure that it was wonderful they had not met in the avenue. The servant to whom he applied, conceiving that his master must return instantly, as he had gone out without his hat, ushered the earl, without farther ceremony, into the breakfast-room, where Clara was seated upon one of the window-seats, so busily employed with a book, or perhaps with her own thoughts while she held a book in her hands, that she scarce raised her head, until Lord Etherington, advancing, pronounced the words, 'Miss Mowbray.' A start and a loud scream announced her deadly alarm, and these were repeated as he made one pace nearer and in a firmer accent said, 'Clara.'

'No nearer—no nearer,' she exclaimed, 'if you would have me look upon you and live!' Lord Etherington remained standing, as if uncertain whether to advance or retreat, while with incredible rapidity she poured out her hurried entreaties

that he would be gone, sometimes addressing him as a real personage, sometimes, and more frequently, as a delusive phantom, the offspring of her own excited imagination. 'I knew it,' she muttered — 'I knew what would happen, if my thoughts were forced into that fearful channel. Speak to me, brother! — speak to me while I have reason left, and tell me that what stands before me is but an empty shadow! But it is no shadow: it remains before me in all the lineaments of mortal substance!'

'Clara,' said the earl, with a firm yet softened voice, 'collect and compose yourself. I am, indeed, no shadow: I am a much-injured man, come to demand rights which have been unjustly withheld from me. I am now armed with power as well as justice, and my claims shall be heard.'

'Never — never!' replied Clara Mowbray; 'since extremity is my portion, let extremity give me courage. You have no rights — none; I know you not, and I defy you.'

'Defy me not, Clara Mowbray,' answered the earl, in a tone and with a manner how different from those which delighted society! for now he was solemn, tragic, and almost stern, like the judge when he passes sentence upon a criminal. 'Defy me not,' he repeated. 'I am your Fate, and it rests with you to make me a kind or severe one.'

'Dare you speak thus?' said Clara, her eyes flashing with anger, while her lips grew white and quivered for fear — 'dare you speak thus, and remember that the same Heaven is above our heads to which you so solemnly vowed you would never see me more without my own consent?'

'That vow was conditional: Francis Tyrrel, as he calls himself, swore the same; hath *he* not seen you?' He fixed a piercing look on her. 'He has; you dare not disown it! And shall an oath which to him is but a cobweb be to me a shackle of iron?'

'Alas! it was but for a moment,' said Miss Mowbray, sinking in courage, and drooping her head as she spoke.

'Were it but the twentieth part of an instant — the least conceivable space of subdivided time — still, you *did* meet: he saw you — you spoke to him. And me also you must see — me also you must hear! Or I will first claim you for my own in the face of the world, and, having vindicated my rights, I will seek out and extinguish the wretched rival who has dared to interfere with them.'

'Can you speak thus?' said Clara — 'can you so burst through the ties of nature? Have you a heart?'

'I have ; and it shall be moulded like wax to your slightest wishes, if you agree to do me justice ; but not granite, nor aught else that nature has of hardest, will be more inflexible if you continue an useless opposition ! Clara Mowbray, I am your Fate.'

'Not so, proud man,' said Clara, rising : 'God gave not one potsherd the power to break another, save by His divine permission ; my fate is in the will of Him without whose will even a sparrow falls not to the ground. Begone ; I am strong in faith of Heavenly protection.'

'Do you speak thus in sincerity ?' said the Earl of Etherington ; 'consider first what is the prospect before you. I stand here in no doubtful or ambiguous character : I offer not the mere name of a husband, propose to you not a humble lot of obscurity and hardship, with fears for the past and doubts for the future ; yet there *was* a time when to a suit like this you could listen favourably. I stand high among the nobles of the country, and offer you, as my bride, your share in my honours and in the wealth which becomes them. Your brother is my friend, and favours my suit. I will raise from the ground and once more render illustrious your ancient house ; your motions shall be regulated by your wishes, even by your caprices ; I will even carry my self-denial so far, that you shall, should you insist on so severe a measure, have your own residence, your own establishment, and without intrusion on my part, until the most devoted love, the most unceasing attentions, shall make way on your inflexible disposition. All this I will consent to for the future ; all that is past shall be concealed from the public. But mine, Clara Mowbray, you must be.'

'Never — never !' she said with increasing vehemence. 'I can but repeat a negative, but it shall have all the force of an oath. Your rank is nothing to me ; your fortune I scorn ; my brother has no right, by the law of Scotland, or of nature, to compel my inclinations. I detest your treachery, and I scorn the advantage you propose to attain by it. Should the law give you my hand, it would but award you that of a corpse.'

'Alas ! Clara,' said the earl, 'you do but flutter in the net ; but I will urge you no farther now, there is another encounter before me.'

He was turning away, when Clara, springing forward, caught him by the arm, and repeated, in a low and impressive voice, the commandment — 'Thou shalt do no murder !'

'Fear not any violence,' he said, softening his voice and

attempting to take her hand, 'but what may flow from your own severity. Francis is safe from me, unless you are altogether unreasonable. Allow me but what you cannot deny to any friend of your brother, the power of seeing you at times; suspend at least the impetuosity of your dislike to me; and I will, on my part, modify the current of my just and otherwise uncontrollable resentment.'

Clara, extricating herself and retreating from him, only replied, 'There is a Heaven above us, and THERE shall be judged our actions towards each other! You abuse a power most treacherously obtained—you break a heart that never did you wrong—you seek an alliance with a wretch who only wishes to be wedded to her grave. If my brother brings you hither, I cannot help it; and if your coming prevents bloody and unnatural violence, it is so far well. But by my consent you come *not*; and, were the choice mine, I would rather be struck with life-long blindness than that my eyes should again open on your person—rather that my ears were stuffed with the earth of the grave than that they should again hear your voice!'

The Earl of Etherington smiled proudly, and replied, 'Even this, madam, I can hear without resentment. Anxious and careful as you are to deprive your compliance of every grace and of every kindness, I receive the permission to wait on you, as I interpret your words.'

'Do not so interpret them,' she replied; 'I do but submit to your presence as an unavoidable evil. Heaven be my witness that, were it not to prevent greater and more desperate evil, I would not even so far acquiesce.'

'Let acquiescence, then, be the word,' he said; 'and so thankful will I be, even for your acquiescence, Miss Mowbray, that all shall remain private which I conceive you do not wish to be disclosed; and, unless absolutely compelled to it in self-defence, you may rely, no violence will be resorted to by me in any quarter. I relieve you from my presence.'

So saying, he withdrew from the apartment.

CHAPTER XXV

Explanatory

By your leave, gentle wax.

SHAKSPEARE.

IN the hall of Shaws Castle the Earl of Etherington met Mowbray, returned from his fruitless chase after the bearer of the anonymous epistle before recited, and who had but just learned, on his return, that the Earl of Etherington was with his sister. There was a degree of mutual confusion when they met; for Mowbray had the contents of the anonymous letter fresh in his mind, and Lord Etherington, notwithstanding all the coolness which he had endeavoured to maintain, had not gone through the scene with Clara without discomposure. Mowbray asked the earl whether he had seen his sister, and invited him, at the same time, to return to the parlour; and his lordship replied, in a tone as indifferent as he could assume, that he had enjoyed the honour of the lady's company for several minutes, and would not now intrude farther upon Miss Mowbray's patience.

'You have had such a reception as was agreeable, my lord, I trust?' said Mowbray. 'I hope Clara did the honours of the house with propriety during my absence?'

'Miss Mowbray seemed a little fluttered with my sudden appearance,' said the earl; 'the servant showed me in rather abruptly; and, circumstanced as we were, there is always awkwardness in a first meeting, where there is no third party to act as master of the ceremonies. I suspect, from the lady's looks, that you have not quite kept my secret, my good friend. I myself, too, felt a little consciousness in approaching Miss Mowbray; but it is over now, and, the ice being fairly broken, I hope to have other and more convenient opportunities to improve the advantage I have just gained in acquiring your lovely sister's personal acquaintance.'

'So be it,' said Mowbray; 'but, as you declare for leaving

the castle just now, I must first speak a single word with your lordship, for which this place is not altogether convenient.'

'I can have no objections, my dear Jack,' said Etherington, following him with a thrill of conscious feeling, somewhat perhaps like that of the spider when he perceives his deceitful web is threatened with injury, and sits balanced in the centre, watching every point, and uncertain which he may be called upon first to defend. Such is one part, and not the slightest part, of the penance which never fails to wait on those who, abandoning the 'fair play of the world,' endeavour to work out their purposes by a process of deception and intrigue.

'My lord,' said Mowbray, when they had entered a little apartment, in which the latter kept his guns, fishing-tackle, and other implements of sport, 'you have played on the square with me; nay, more, I am bound to allow you have given me great odds. I am therefore not entitled to hear any reports to the prejudice of your lordship's character without instantly communicating them. There is an anonymous letter which I have just received. Perhaps your lordship may know the hand, and thus be enabled to detect the writer.'

'I do know the hand,' said the earl, as he received the note from Mowbray; 'and, allow me to say, it is the only one which could have dared to frame any calumny to my prejudice. I hope, Mr. Mowbray, it is impossible for you to consider this infamous charge as anything but a falsehood?'

'My placing it in your lordship's hands without farther inquiry is a sufficient proof that I hold it such, my lord; at the same time that I cannot doubt for a moment that your lordship has it in your power to overthrow so frail a calumny by the most satisfactory evidence.'

'Unquestionably I can, Mr. Mowbray,' said the earl; 'for, besides my being in full possession of the estate and title of my father, the late Earl of Etherington, I have my father's contract of marriage, my own certificate of baptism, and the evidence of the whole country, to establish my right. All these shall be produced with the least delay possible. You will not think it surprising that one does not travel with this sort of documents in one's post-chaise.'

'Certainly not, my lord,' said Mowbray; 'it is sufficient they are forthcoming when called for. But may I inquire, my lord, who the writer of this letter is, and whether he has any particular spleen to gratify by this very impudent assertion, which is so easily capable of being disproved?'

'He is,' said Etherington, 'or at least has the reputation of being, I am sorry to say, a near — a very near relation of my own — in fact, a brother by the father's side, but illegitimate. My father was fond of him. I loved him also, for he has uncommonly fine parts, and is accounted highly accomplished. But there is a strain of something irregular in his mind — a vein, in short, of madness, which breaks out in the usual manner, rendering the poor young man a dupe to vain imaginations of his own dignity and grandeur, which is perhaps the most ordinary effect of insanity, and inspiring the deepest aversion against his nearest relatives, and against myself in particular. He is a man extremely plausible both in speech and manners; so much so, that many of my friends think there is more vice than insanity in the irregularities which he commits; but I may, I hope, be forgiven if I have formed a milder judgment of one supposed to be my father's son. Indeed, I cannot help being sorry for poor Frank, who might have made a very distinguished figure in the world.'

'May I ask the gentleman's name, my lord?' said Mowbray.

'My father's indulgence gave him our family name of Tyrrel, with his own Christian name Francis; but his proper name, to which alone he has a right, is Martigny.'

'Francis Tyrrel!' exclaimed Mowbray; 'why, that is the name of the very person who made some disturbance at the Well just before your lordship arrived. You may have seen an advertisement — a sort of placard?'

'I have, Mr. Mowbray,' said the earl. 'Spare me on that subject, if you please; it has formed a strong reason why I did not mention my connexion with this unhappy man before; but it is no unusual thing for persons whose imaginations are excited to rush into causeless quarrels and then to make discreditable retreats from them.'

'Or,' said Mr. Mowbray, 'he may have, after all, been prevented from reaching the place of rendezvous; it was that very day on which your lordship, I think, received your wound, and, if I mistake not, you hit the man from whom you got the hurt.'

'Mowbray,' said Lord Etherington, lowering his voice, and taking him by the arm, 'it is true that I did so; and truly glad I am to observe that, whatever might have been the consequences of such an accident, they cannot have been serious. It struck me afterwards that the man by whom I was so strangely assaulted had some resemblance to the unfortunate

Tyrrel, but I had not seen him for years. At any rate, he cannot have been much hurt, since he is now able to resume his intrigues to the prejudice of my character.'

'Your lordship views the thing with a firm eye,' said Mowbray — 'firmer than I think most people would be able to command, who had so narrow a chance of a scrape so uncomfortable.'

'Why, I am, in the first place, by no means sure that the risk existed,' said the Earl of Etherington; 'for, as I have often told you, I had but a very transient glimpse of the ruffian; and, in the second place, I *am* sure that no permanent bad consequences have ensued. I am too old a fox-hunter to be afraid of a leap after it is cleared, as they tell of the fellow who fainted in the morning at the sight of the precipice he had clambered over when he was drunk on the night before. The man who wrote that letter,' touching it with his finger, 'is alive and able to threaten me; and if he did come to any hurt from my hand, it was in the act of attempting my life, of which I shall carry the mark to my grave.'

'Nay, I am far from blaming your lordship,' said Mowbray, 'for what you did in self-defence, but the circumstance might have turned out very unpleasant. May I ask what you intend to do with this unfortunate gentleman, who is in all probability in the neighbourhood?'

'I must first discover the place of his retreat,' said Lord Etherington, 'and then consider what is to be done both for his safety, poor fellow, and my own. It is probable, too, that he may find sharpers to prey upon what fortune he still possesses, which, I assure you, is sufficient to attract a set of folk who may ruin while they humour him. May I beg that you, too, will be on the outlook, and let me know if you hear or see more of him?'

'I shall, most certainly, my lord,' answered Mowbray; 'but the only one of his haunts which I know is the old Cleikum Inn, where he chose to take up his residence. He has now left it, but perhaps the old crab-fish of a landlady may know something of him.'

'I will not fail to inquire,' said Lord Etherington; and, with these words, he took a kind farewell of Mowbray, mounted his horse, and rode up the avenue.

'A cool fellow,' said Mowbray, as he looked after him — 'a d—d cool fellow, this brother-in-law of mine, that is to be — takes a shot at his father's son with as little remorse as at a

blackcock ; what would he do with me, were we to quarrel ? Well, I can snuff a candle and strike out the ace of hearts ; and so, should things go wrong, he has no Jack Raw to deal with, but Jack Mowbray.

Meanwhile, the Earl of Etherington hastened home to his own apartments at the hotel ; and, not entirely pleased with the events of the day, commenced a letter to his correspondent, agent, and confidant, Captain Jekyl, which we have fortunately the means of presenting to our readers : —

‘FRIEND HARRY —

‘They say a falling house is best known by the rats leaving it, a falling state by the desertion of confederates and allies, and a falling man by the desertion of his friends. If this be true augury, your last letter may be considered as ominous of my breaking down. Methinks, you have gone far enough, and shared deep enough, with me to have some confidence in my *savoir faire* — some little faith both in my means and management. What cross-grained fiend has at once inspired you with what I suppose you wish me to call politic doubts and scruples of conscience, but which I can only regard as symptoms of fear and disaffection ? You can have no idea of “duels betwixt relations so nearly connected” ; and “the affair seems very delicate and intricate” ; and again, “the matter has never been fully explained to you” ; and, moreover, “if you are expected to take an active part in the business, it must be when you are honoured with my full and unreserved confidence, otherwise, how could you be of the use to me which I might require ?” Such are your expressions.

‘Now, as to scruples of conscience about near relations, and so forth, all that has blown by without much mischief, and certainly is not likely to occur again ; besides, did you never hear of friends quarrelling before ? And are they not to exercise the usual privileges of gentlemen when they do ? Moreover, how am I to know that this plaguy fellow is actually related to me ? They say it is a wise child knows its own father ; and I cannot be expected wise enough to know to a certainty my father’s son. So much for relationship. Then, as to full and unreserved confidence — why, Harry, this is just as if I were to ask you to look at a watch and tell what it was o’clock, and you were to reply, that truly you could not inform me, because you had not examined the springs, the counter-balances, the wheels, and the whole internal machinery of the

little timepiece. But the upshot of the whole is this — Harry Jekyl, who is as sharp a fellow as any other, thinks he has his friend Lord Etherington at a dead-lock, and that he knows already so much of the said noble lord's history as to oblige his lordship to tell him the whole. And perhaps he not unreasonably concludes, that the custody of a whole secret is more creditable, and probably more lucrative, than that of a half one; and, in short, he is resolved to make the most of the cards in his hand. Another, mine honest Harry, would take the trouble to recall to your mind past times and circumstances, and conclude with expressing a humble opinion that, if Harry Jekyl were asked *now* to do any service for the noble lord aforesaid, Harry had got his reward in his pocket aforehand. But I do not argue thus, because I would rather be leagued with a friend who assists me with a view to future profit than from respect to benefits already received. The first lies like the fox's scent when on his last legs, increasing every moment; the other is a back-scent, growing colder the longer you follow it, until at last it becomes impossible to puzzle it out. I will therefore submit to circumstances, and tell you the whole story, though somewhat tedious, in hopes that I can conclude with such a trail as you will open upon breast-high.

'Thus then it was. Francis, fifth Earl of Etherington, and my much-honoured father, was what is called a very eccentric man — that is, he was neither a wise man nor a fool: had too much sense to walk into a well, and yet, in some of the furious fits which he was visited with, I have seen him quite mad enough to throw any one else into it. Men said there was a lurking insanity; but it is an ill bird, etc., and I will say no more about it. This shatter-brained peer was, in other respects, a handsome, accomplished man, with an expression somewhat haughty, yet singularly pleasing when he chose it — a man, in short, who might push his fortune with the fair sex.

'Lord Etherington, such as I have described him, being upon his travels in France, formed an attachment of the heart — ay, and some have pretended of the hand also — with a certain beautiful orphan, Marie de Martigny. Of this union is said to have sprung, for I am determined not to be certain on that point, that most incommodious person, Francis Tyrrel, as he calls himself, but as I would rather call him, Francis Martigny; the latter suiting my views, as perhaps the former name agrees better with his pretensions. Now, I am too good a son to subscribe to the alleged regularity of the marriage between my

right honourable and very good lord father, because my said right honourable and very good lord did, on his return to England, become wedded, in the face of the church, to my very affectionate and well-endowed mother, Ann Bulmer of Bulmer Hall, from which happy union sprung I, Francis Valentine Bulmer Tyrrel, lawful inheritor of my father and mother's joint estates, as I was the proud possessor of their ancient names. But the noble and wealthy pair, though blessed with such a pledge of love as myself, lived mighty ill together, and the rather, when my right honourable father, sending for this other Sosia, this unlucky Francis Tyrrel, senior, from France, insisted, in the face of propriety, that he should reside in his house, and share, in all respects, in the opportunities of education by which the real Sosia, Francis Valentine Bulmer Tyrrel, then commonly called Lord Oakendale, hath profited in such an uncommon degree.

Various were the matrimonial quarrels which arose between the honoured lord and lady, in consequence of this unseemly conjunction of the legitimate and illegitimate; and to these we, the subjects of the dispute, were sometimes very properly, as well as decorously, made the witnesses. On one occasion my right honourable mother, who was a free-spoken lady, found the language of her own rank quite inadequate to express the strength of her generous feelings, and borrowing from the vulgar two emphatic words, applied them to Marie de Martigny and her son Francis Tyrrel. Never did earl that ever wore coronet fly into a pitch of more uncontrollable rage than did my right honourable father; and in the ardour of his reply he adopted my mother's phraseology, to inform her that, if there *was* a whore and bastard connected with his house, it was herself and her brat.

'I was even then a sharp little fellow, and was incredibly struck with the communication which, in this hour of ungovernable irritation, had escaped my right honourable father. It is true, he instantly gathered himself up again; and, he perhaps recollecting such a word as "bigamy," and my mother, on her side, considering the consequences of such a thing as a descent from the Countess of Etherington into Mrs. Bulmer, neither wife, maid, nor widow, there was an apparent reconciliation between them, which lasted for some time. But the speech remained deeply imprinted on my remembrance; the more so, that once, when I was exerting over my friend, Francis Tyrrel, the authority of a legitimate brother and Lord Oakendale, old

Cecil, my father's confidential valet, was so much scandalised as to intimate a possibility that we might one day change conditions. These two accidental communications seemed to me a key to certain long lectures with which my father used to regale us boys, but me in particular, upon the extreme mutability of human affairs, the disappointment of the best-grounded hopes and expectations, and the necessity of being so accomplished in all useful branches of knowledge as might, in case of accidents, supply any defalcation in our rank and fortune, as if any art or science could make amends for the loss of an earldom and twelve thousand a-year! All this prosing seemed to my anxious mind designed to prepare me for some unfortunate change; and when I was old enough to make such private inquiries as lay in my power, I became still more persuaded that my right honourable father nourished some thoughts of making an honest woman of Marie de Martigny and a legitimate elder brother of Francis, after his death at least, if not during his life. I was the more convinced of this, when a little affair, which I chanced to have with the daughter of my tu——, drew down my father's wrath upon me in great abundance, and occasioned my being banished to Scotland, along with my brother, under a very poor allowance, without introductions, except to one steady, or call it rusty, old professor, and with the charge that I should not assume the title of Lord Oakendale, but content myself with my maternal grandfather's name of Valentine Bulmer, that of Francis Tyrrel being preoccupied.

‘Upon this occasion, notwithstanding the fear which I entertained of my father's passionate temper, I did venture to say, that since I was to resign my title, I thought I had a right to keep my family name, and that my brother might take his mother's. I wish you had seen the look of rage with which my father regarded me when I gave him this spirited hint. “Thou art,” he said, and paused, as if to find out the bitterest epithet to supply the blank — “thou art thy mother's child, and her perfect picture (this seemed the severest reproach that occurred to him). Bear her name, then, and bear it with patience and in secrecy; or, I here give you my word, you shall never bear another the whole days of your life.” This sealed my mouth with a witness; and then, in allusion to my flirtation with the daughter of my tu—— aforesaid, he enlarged on the folly and iniquity of private marriages, warned me that in the country I was going to the matrimonial noose often lies hid under flowers,

and that folks find it twitched round their neck when they least expect such a cravat; assured me that he had very particular views for settling Francis and me in life, and that he would forgive neither of us who should, by any such rash entanglements, render them unavailing.

'This last minatory admonition was the more tolerable that my rival had his share of it; and so we were bundled off to Scotland, coupled up like two pointers in a dog-cart, and — I can speak for one at least — with much the same uncordial feelings towards each other. I often, indeed, detected Francis looking at me with a singular expression, as of pity and anxiety, and once or twice he seemed disposed to enter on something respecting the situation in which we stood towards each other; but I felt no desire to encourage his confidence. Meantime, as we were called, by our father's directions, not brothers, but cousins, so we came to bear towards each other the habits of companionship, though scarcely of friendship. What Francis thought, I know not; for my part, I must confess that I lay by on the watch for some opportunity when I might mend my own situation with my father, though at the prejudice of my rival. And Fortune, while she seemed to prevent such an opportunity, involved us both in one of the strangest and most entangled mazes that her capricious divinityship ever wove, and out of which I am even now struggling, by sleight or force, to extricate myself. I can hardly help wondering, even yet, at the odd conjunction which has produced such an intricacy of complicated incidents.

'My father was a great sportsman, and Francis and I had both inherited his taste for field-sports, but I in a keener and more ecstatic degree. Edinburgh, which is a tolerable residence in winter and spring, becomes disagreeable in summer, and in autumn is the most melancholy *sejour* that ever poor mortals were condemned to. No public places are open, no inhabitant of any consideration remains in the town; those who cannot get away hide themselves in obscure corners, as if ashamed to be seen in the streets. The gentry go to their country-houses, the citizens to their sea-bathing quarters, the lawyers to their circuits, the writers to visit their country clients, and all the world to the moors to shoot grouse. We, who felt the indignity of remaining in town during this deserted season, obtained, with some difficulty, permission from the earl to betake ourselves to any obscure corner and shoot grouse, if we could get leave to do so on our general character

of English students at the University of Edinburgh, without quoting anything more.

'The first year of our banishment we went to the neighbourhood of the Highlands; but finding our sport interrupted by gamekeepers and their gillies, on the second occasion we established ourselves at this little village of St. Ronan's, where there were then no Spa, no fine people, no card-tables, no quizzes, excepting the old quiz of a landlady with whom we lodged. We found the place much to our mind; the old landlady had interest with some old fellow, agent of a non-residing nobleman, who gave us permission to sport over his moors, of which I availed myself keenly, and Francis with more moderation. He was, indeed, of a grave, musing sort of habit, and often preferred solitary walks, in the wild and beautiful scenery with which the village is surrounded, to the use of the gun. He was attached to fishing, moreover, that dullest of human amusements, and this also tended to keep us considerably apart. This gave me rather pleasure than concern; not that I hated Francis at that time — nay, not that I greatly disliked his society — but merely because it was unpleasant to be always with one whose fortunes I looked upon as standing in direct opposition to my own. I also rather despised the indifference about sport, which indeed seemed to grow upon him; but my gentleman had better taste than I was aware of. If he sought no grouse on the hill, he had flushed a pheasant in the wood.

'Clara Mowbray, daughter of the lord of the more picturesque than wealthy domain of St. Ronan's, was at that time scarce sixteen years old, and as wild and beautiful a woodland nymph as the imagination can fancy — simple as a child in all that concerned the world and its ways, acute as a needle in every point of knowledge which she had found an opportunity of becoming acquainted with, fearing harm from no one, and with a lively and natural strain of wit, which brought amusement and gaiety wherever she came. Her motions were under no restraint save that of her own inclination; for her father, though a cross, peevish, old man, was confined to his chair with the gout, and her only companion, a girl of somewhat inferior caste, bred up in the utmost deference to Miss Mowbray's fancies, served for company indeed in her strolls through the wild country on foot and on horseback, but never thought of interfering with her will and pleasure.

'The extreme loneliness of the country (at that time), and

the simplicity of its inhabitants, seemed to render these excursions perfectly safe. Francis, happy dog, became the companion of the damsels on such occasions through the following accident. Miss Mowbray had dressed herself and her companion like country wenches, with a view to surprise the family of one of their better sort of farmers. They had accomplished their purpose greatly to their satisfaction, and were hieing home after sunset, when they were encountered by a country fellow — a sort of Harry Jekyl in his way — who, being equipped with a glass or two of whisky, saw not the nobility of blood through her disguise, and accosted the daughter of a hundred sires as he would have done a ewe-milker. Miss Mowbray remonstrated — her companion screamed — up came cousin Francis with a fowling-piece on his shoulder, and soon put the silvan to flight.

‘This was the beginning of an acquaintance which had gone great lengths before I found it out. The fair Clara, it seems, found it safer to roam in the woods with an escort than alone, and my studious and sentimental relative was almost her constant companion. At their age, it was likely that some time might pass ere they came to understand each other ; but full confidence and intimacy was established between them ere I heard of their *amour*.

‘And here, Harry, I must pause till next morning, and send you the conclusion under a separate cover. The rap which I had over the elbow the other day is still tingling at the end of my fingers, and you must not be critical with my manuscript.’

CHAPTER XXVI

Letter Continued

Must I then ravel out
My weaved-up follies?

SHAKSPEARE.

I RESUME my pen, Harry, to mention, without attempting to describe my surprise, that Francis, compelled by circumstances, made me the confidant of his love-intrigue. My grave cousin in love, and very much in the mind of approaching the perilous verge of clandestine marriage—he who used every now and then, not much to the improvement of our cordial regard, to lecture me upon filial duty, just upon the point of slipping the bridle himself! I could not for my life tell whether surprise or a feeling of mischievous satisfaction was predominant. I tried to talk to him as he used to talk to me; but I had not the gift of persuasion, or he the power of understanding the words of wisdom. He insisted our situation was different—that his unhappy birth, as he termed it, freed him at least from dependence on his father's absolute will; that he had, by bequest from some relative of his mother, a moderate competence, which Miss Mowbray had consented to share with him; in fine, that he desired not my counsel but my assistance. A moment's consideration convinced me that I should be unkind, not to him only but to myself, unless I gave him all the backing I could in this his most dutiful scheme. I recollected our right honourable father's denunciations against Scottish marriages, and secret marriages of all sorts—denunciations perhaps not the less vehement that he might feel some secret prick of conscience on the subject himself. I remembered that my grave brother had always been a favourite, and I forgot not—how was it possible I could forget?—those ominous expressions which intimated a possibility of the hereditary estate and honours being transferred to the elder, instead of the younger, son.

Now, it required no conjurer to foresee that, should Francis commit this inexpressible crime of secretly allying himself with a Scottish beauty, our sire would lose all wish to accomplish such a transference in his favour; and while my brother's merits were altogether obscured by such an unpardonable act of disobedience, my own, no longer overshadowed by prejudice or partiality, would shine forth in all their natural brilliancy. These considerations, which flashed on me with the rapidity of lightning, induced me to consent to hold Frank's back-hand during the perilous game he proposed to play. I had only to take care that my own share in the matter should not be so prominent as to attract my father's attention; and this I was little afraid of, for his wrath was usually of that vehement and forcible character which, like lightning, is attracted to one single point, there bursting with violence as undivided as it was uncontrollable.

'I soon found the lovers needed my assistance more than I could have supposed; for they were absolute novices in any sort of intrigue, which to me seemed as easy and natural as lying. Francis had been detected by some tattling spy in his walks with Clara, and the news had been carried to old Mowbray, who was greatly incensed at his daughter, though little knowing that her crime was greater than admitting an unknown English student to form a personal acquaintance with her. He prohibited farther intercourse; resolved, in justice-of-peace phrase, to rid the country of us; and, prudently sinking all mention of his daughter's delinquency, commenced an action against Francis, under pretext of punishing him as an encroacher upon his game, but in reality to scare him from the neighbourhood. His person was particularly described to all the keepers and satellites about Shaws Castle, and any personal intercourse betwixt him and Clara became impossible, except under the most desperate risks. Nay, such was their alarm, that Master Francis thought it prudent, for Miss Mowbray's sake, to withdraw as far as a town called Marchthorn, and there to conceal himself, maintaining his intercourse with Clara only by letter.

'It was then I became the sheet-anchor of the hope of the lovers; it was then my early dexterity and powers of contrivance were first put to the test; and it would be too long to tell you in how many shapes, and by how many contrivances, I acted as agent, letter-carrier, and go-between to maintain the intercourse of these separated turtles. I have had a good deal of

trouble in that way on my own account, but never half so much as I took on account of this brace of lovers. I scaled walls and swam rivers, set bloodhounds, quarterstaves, and blunderbusses at defiance; and, excepting the distant prospect of self-interest which I have hinted at, I was neither to have honour nor reward for my pains. I will own to you that Clara Mowbray was so very beautiful, so absolutely confiding in her lover's friend, and thrown into such close intercourse with me, that there were times when I thought that, in conscience, she ought not to have scrupled to have contributed a mite to reward the faithful labourer. But then she looked like purity itself; and I was such a novice at that time of day, that I did not know how it might have been possible for me to retreat, if I had made too bold an advance; and, in short, I thought it best to content myself with assisting true love to run smooth, in the hope that its course would assure me, in the long-run, an earl's title and an earl's fortune.

'Nothing was, therefore, ventured on my part which could raise suspicion, and, as the confidential friend of the lovers, I prepared everything for their secret marriage. The pastor of the parish agreed to perform the ceremony, prevailed upon by an argument which I used to him, and which Clara, had she guessed it, would have little thanked me for. I led the honest man to believe that, in declining to do his office, he might prevent a too successful lover from doing justice to a betrayed maiden; and the parson, who, I found, had a spice of romance in his disposition, resolved, under such pressing circumstances, to do them the kind office of binding them together, although the consequence might be a charge of irregularity against himself. Old Mowbray was much confined to his room, his daughter less watched since Frank had removed from the neighbourhood, the brother (which, by the by, I should have said before) not then in the country; and it was settled that the lovers should meet at the old kirk of St. Ronan's when the twilight became deep, and go off in a chaise for England so soon as the ceremony was performed.

'When all this was arranged save the actual appointment of the day, you cannot conceive the happiness and the gratitude of my sage brother. He looked upon himself as approaching to the seventh heaven, instead of losing his chance of a good fortune, and encumbering himself at nineteen with a wife, and all the probabilities of narrow circumstances and an increasing family. Though so much younger myself, I could not

help wondering at his extreme want of knowledge of the world, and feeling ashamed that I had ever allowed him to take the airs of a tutor with me; and this conscious superiority supported me against the thrill of jealousy which always seized me when I thought of his carrying off the beautiful prize, which, without my address, he could never have made his own. But at this important crisis I had a letter from my father, which, by some accident, had long lain at our lodgings in Edinburgh, had then visited our former quarters in the Highlands, again returned to Edinburgh, and at length reached me at Marchthorn in a most critical time.

‘It was in reply to a letter of mine, in which, among other matters, such as good boys send to their papas — descriptions of the country, accounts of studies, exercises, and so forth — I had, to fill up the sheet to a dutiful length, thrown in something about the family of St. Ronan’s, in the neighbourhood of which I was writing. I had no idea what an effect the name would produce on the mind of my right honourable father, but his letter sufficiently expressed it. He charged me to cultivate the acquaintance of Mr. Mowbray as fast and as intimately as possible; and, if need were, to inform him candidly of our real character and situation in life. Wisely considering, at the same time, that his filial admonition might be neglected if not backed by some sufficient motive, his lordship frankly let me into the secret of my grand-uncle by the mother’s side, Mr. S. Mowbray of Nettlewood’s last will and testament, by which I saw, to my astonishment and alarm, that a large and fair estate was bequeathed to the eldest son and heir of the Earl of Etherington, on condition of his forming a matrimonial alliance with a lady of the house of Mowbray of St. Ronan’s. Mercy of Heaven! how I stared! Here had I been making every preparation for wedding Francis to the very girl whose hand would ensure to myself wealth and independence! And even the first loss, though great, was not likely to be the last. My father spoke of the marriage like a land-surveyor, but of the estate of Nettlewood like an impassioned lover. He seemed to dote on every acre of it, and dwelt on its contiguity to his own domains as a circumstance which rendered the union of the estates not desirable merely, but constituted an arrangement pointed out by the hand of nature. And although he observed that, on account of the youth of the parties, a treaty of marriage could not be immediately undertaken, it was yet clear he would approve at heart of any bold stroke which would abolish the interval of

time that might otherwise intervene ere Oakendale and Nettlewood became one property.

‘Here, then, were shipwrecked my fair hopes. It was clear as sunshine that a private marriage, unpardonable in the abstract, would become venial, nay, highly laudable, in my father’s eyes if it united his heir with Clara Mowbray ; and if he really had, as my fears suggested, the means of establishing legitimacy on my brother’s part, nothing was so likely to tempt him to use them as the certainty that, by his doing so, Nettlewood and Oakendale would be united into one. The very catastrophe which I had prepared, as sure to exclude my rival from his father’s favour, was thus likely, unless it could be prevented, to become a strong motive and argument for the earl placing his rights above mine.

‘I shut myself up in my bedroom, locked the door, read, and again read my father’s letter ; and, instead of giving way to idle passion — beware of that, Harry, even in the most desperate circumstances — I considered, with keen investigation, whether some remedy could not yet be found. To break off the match for the time would have been easy : a little private information to Mr. Mowbray would have done that with a vengeance. But then the treaty might be renewed under my father’s auspices ; at all events, the share which I had taken in the intrigue between Clara and my brother rendered it almost impossible for me to become a suitor in my own person. Amid these perplexities it suddenly occurred to my adventurous heart and contriving brain — what if I should personate the bridegroom ? This strange thought, you will recollect, occurred to a very youthful brain ; it was banished — it returned — returned again and again — was viewed under every different shape — became familiar — was adopted. It was easy to fix the appointment with Clara and the clergyman, for I managed the whole correspondence ; the resemblance between Francis and me in stature and in proportion — the disguise which we were to assume — the darkness of the church — the hurry of the moment — might, I trusted, prevent Clara from recognising me. To the minister I had only to say that, though I had hitherto talked of a friend, I myself was the happy man. My first name was Francis as well as his ; and I had found Clara so gentle, so confiding, so flatteringly cordial in her intercourse with me, that, once within my power, and prevented from receding by shame and a thousand contradictory feelings, I had, with the vanity of an *amoureux de seize ans*, the

confidence to believe I could reconcile the fair lady to the exchange.

‘There certainly never came such a thought into a madcap’s brain ; and, what is more extraordinary — but that you already know — it was so far successful, that the marriage ceremony was performed between us in the presence of a servant of mine, Clara’s accommodating companion, and the priest. We got into the carriage, and were a mile from the church, when my unlucky or lucky brother stopped the chaise by force ; through what means he had obtained knowledge of my little trick, I never have been able to learn. Solmes has been faithful to me in too many instances, that I should suspect him in this important crisis. I jumped out of the carriage, pitched fraternity to the devil, and, betwixt desperation and something very like shame, began to cut away with a *couteau de chasse*, which I had provided in case of necessity. All was in vain ; I was hustled down under the wheel of the carriage, and the horses taking fright, it went over my body.

‘Here ends my narrative ; for I neither heard nor saw more until I found myself stretched on a sick-bed many miles from the scene of action, and Solmes engaged in attending on me. In answer to my passionate inquiries, he briefly informed me, that Master Francis had sent back the young lady to her own dwelling, and that she appeared to be extremely ill in consequence of the alarm she had sustained. My own health, he assured me, was considered as very precarious, and added, that Tyrrel, who was in the same house, was in the utmost perturbation on my account. The very mention of his name brought on a crisis in which I brought up much blood ; and it is singular that the physician who attended me — a grave gentleman, with a wig — considered that this was of service to me. I know it frightened me heartily, and prepared me for a visit from Master Frank, which I endured with a tameness he would not have experienced had the usual current of blood flowed in my veins. But sickness and the lancet make one very tolerant of sermonising. At last, in consideration of being relieved from his accursed presence and the sound of his infernally calm voice, I slowly and reluctantly acquiesced in an arrangement by which he proposed that we should for ever bid adieu to each other and to Clara Mowbray. I would have hesitated at this last stipulation. “She was,” I said, “my wife, and I was entitled to claim her as such.”

‘This drew down a shower of most moral reproaches, and

an assurance that Clara disowned and detested my alliance, and that, where there had been an essential error in the person, the mere ceremony could never be accounted binding by the law of any Christian country. I wonder this had not occurred to me; but my ideas of marriage were much founded on plays and novels, where such devices as I had practised are often resorted to for winding up the plot, without any hint of their illegality; besides, I had confided, as I mentioned before, a little too rashly, perhaps, in my own powers of persuading so young a bride as Clara to be contented with one handsome fellow instead of another.

'Solmes took up the argument, when Francis released me by leaving the room. He spoke of my father's resentment, should this enterprise reach his ears; of the revenge of Mowbray of St. Ronan's, whose nature was both haughty and rugged; of risk from the laws of the country, and God knows what hugbears besides, which, at a more advanced age, I would have laughed at. In a word, I sealed the capitulation, vowed perpetual absence, and banished myself, as they say in this country, forth of Scotland.

'And here, Harry, observe and respect my genius. Every circumstance was against me in this negotiation. I had been the aggressor in the war; I was wounded, and, it might be said, a prisoner in my antagonist's hands; yet I could so far avail myself of Monsieur Martigny's greater eagerness for peace, that I clogged the treaty with a condition highly advantageous to myself and equally unfavourable to him. Said Mr. Francis Martigny was to take upon himself the burden of my right honourable father's displeasure; and our separation, which was certain to give immense offence, was to be represented as his work, not as mine. I insisted, tender-hearted, dutiful soul as I was, that I would consent to no measure which was to bring down papa's displeasure. This was a *sine quâ non* in our negotiation.

Voilà ce que c'est d'avoir des talens !

'Monsieur Francis would, I suppose, have taken the world on his shoulders to have placed an eternal separation betwixt his turtle-dove and the falcon who had made so bold a pounce at her. What he wrote to my father I know not; as for myself, in all duty, I represented the bad state of my health from an accident, and that my brother and companion having been suddenly called from me by some cause which he had not ex-

plained, I had thought it necessary to get to London for the best advice, and only waited his lordship's permission to return to the paternal mansion. This I soon received, and found, as I expected, that he was in towering wrath against my brother for his disobedience; and, after some time, I even had reason to think—as how could it be otherwise, Harry?—that, on becoming better acquainted with the merits and amiable manners of his apparent heir, he lost any desire which he might formerly have entertained of accomplishing any change in my circumstances in relation to the world. Perhaps the old peer turned a little ashamed of his own conduct, and dared not aver to the congregation of the righteous, for he became saintly in his latter days, the very pretty frolics which he seems to have been guilty of in his youth. Perhaps, also, the death of my right honourable mother operated in my favour, since, while she lived, my chance was the worse: there is no saying what a man will do to spite his wife. Enough, he died—slept with his right honourable fathers, and I became, without opposition, right honourable in his stead.

‘How I have borne my new honours, thou, Harry, and our merry set, know full well. Newmarket and Tattersall’s may tell the rest. I think I have been as lucky as most men where luck is most prized, and so I shall say no more on that subject.

‘And now, Harry, I will suppose thee in a moralising mood; that is, I will fancy the dice have run wrong, or your double-barrel has hung fire, or a certain lady has looked cross, or any such weighty cause of gravity has occurred, and you give me the benefit of your seriousness. “My dear Etherington,” say you pithily, “you are a precious fool! Here you are, stirring up a business rather scandalous in itself, and fraught with mischief to all concerned—a business which might sleep for ever, if you let it alone, but which is sure, like a sea-coal fire, to burst into a flame if you go on poking it. I would like to ask your lordship only two questions,” say you, with your usual graceful attitude of adjusting your perpendicular shirt-collar, and passing your hand over the knot of your cravat, which deserves a peculiar place in the *Tietania*—“only two questions; that is, Whether you do not repent the past, and Whether you do not fear the future?” Very comprehensive queries, these of yours, Harry; for they respect both the time past and the time to come—one’s whole life, in short. However, I shall endeavour to answer them as well as I may.

'Repent the past, said you? Yes, Harry, I think I do repent the past—that is, not quite in the parson's style of repentance, which resembles yours when you have a headache, but as I would repent a hand at cards which I had played on false principles. I should have begun with the young lady—availed myself in a very different manner of Monsieur Martigny's absence and my own intimacy with her, and thus superseded him, if possible, in the damsel's affections. The scheme I adopted, though there was, I think, both boldness and dexterity in it, was that of a novice of premature genius, who could not calculate chances. . So much for repentance. Do I not fear the future? Harry, I will not cut your throat for supposing you to have put the question, but calmly assure you that I never feared anything in my life. I was born without the sensation, I believe; at least, it is perfectly unknown to me. When I felt that cursed wheel pass across my breast, when I felt the pistol-ball benumb my arm, I felt no more agitation than at the bounce of a champagne-cork. But I would not have you think that I am fool enough to risk plague, trouble, and danger—all of which, besides considerable expense, I am now prepared to encounter—without some adequate motive, and here it is.

'From various quarters, hints, rumours, and surmises have reached me, that an attack will be made on my rank and status in society, which can only be in behalf of this fellow Martigny, for I will not call him by his stolen name of Tyrrel. Now, this I hold to be a breach of the paction betwixt us, by which—that is, by that which I am determined to esteem its true meaning and purport—he was to leave my right honourable father and me to settle our own matters without his interference, which amounted to a virtual resignation of his rights, if the scoundrel ever had any. Can he expect I am to resign my wife, and what is a better thing, old Scrogie Mowbray's estate of Nettlewood, to gratify the humour of a fellow who sets up claims to my title and whole property? No, by——! If he assails me in a point so important, I will retaliate upon him in one where he will feel as keenly; and that he may depend upon. And now, methinks, you come upon me with a second edition of your grave remonstrances, about family feuds, unnatural rencontres, offence to all the feelings of all the world, *et cetera, et cetera*, which you might usher in most delectably with the old stave about brethren dwelling together in unity. I will not stop to inquire whether all these delicate appre-

hensions are on account of the Earl of Etherington, his safety, and his reputation, or whether my friend Harry Jekyl be not considering how far his own interference with such a naughty business will be well taken at headquarters; and so, without pausing on that question, I shall barely and briefly say, that you cannot be more sensible than I am of the madness of bringing matters to such an extremity. I have no such intention, I assure you, and it is with no such purpose that I invite you here. Were I to challenge Martigny, he would refuse me the meeting; and all less ceremonious ways of arranging such an affair are quite old-fashioned.

'It is true, at our first meeting, I was betrayed into the scrape I told you of, just as you may have shot, or shot *at* — for I think you are no downright hitter — a hen-pheasant, when flushed within distance, by a sort of instinctive movement, without reflecting on the enormity you are about to commit. The truth is, there is an *ignis fatuus* influence which seems to govern our house: it poured its wildfire through my father's veins, it has descended to me in full vigour, and every now and then its impulse is irresistible. There was my enemy, and here were my pistols, was all I had time to think about the matter. But I will be on my guard in future, the more surely, as I cannot receive any provocation from him; on the contrary, if I must confess the truth, though I was willing to gloss it a little in my first account of the matter, like the Gazette, when recording a defeat, I am certain he would never voluntarily have fired at me, and that his pistol went off as he fell. You know me well enough to be assured that I will never be again in the scrape of attacking an unresisting antagonist, were he ten times my brother.

'Then, as to this long tirade about hating my brother — Harry, I do not hate him more than the first-born of Egypt are in general hated by those whom they exclude from entailed estates, and so forth: not one landed man in twenty of us that is not hated by his younger brothers, to the extent of wishing him quiet in his grave, as an abominable stumbling-block in their path of life; and so far only do I hate Monsieur Martigny. But for the rest, I rather like him as otherwise; and would he but die, would give my frank consent to his being canonised; and while he lives, I am not desirous that he should be exposed to any temptation from rank and riches, those main obstacles to the self-denying course of life by which the odour of sanctity is attained.

‘Here again you break in with your impertinent queries— If I have no purpose of quarrelling personally with Martigny, why do I come into collision with him at all? why not abide by the treaty of Marchthorn, and remain in England, without again approaching St. Ronan’s or claiming my maiden bride?’

‘Have I not told you, I want him to cease all threatened attempts upon my fortune and dignity? Have I not told you, that I want to claim my wife, Clara Mowbray, and my estate of Nettlewood, fairly won by marrying her? And, to let you into the whole secret, though Clara is a very pretty woman, yet she goes for so little in the transaction with me, her unimpassioned bridegroom, that I hope to make some relaxation of my rights over her the means of obtaining the concessions which I think most important.

‘I will not deny, that an aversion to awakening bustle and encountering reproach has made me so slow in looking after my interest, that the period will shortly expire within which I ought, by old Scrog Mowbray’s will, to qualify myself for becoming his heir, by being the accepted husband of Miss Mowbray of St. Ronan’s. Time was—time is—and, if I catch it not by the forelock as it passes, time will be no more—Nettlewood will be forfeited; and if I have in addition a lawsuit for my title, and for Oakendale, I run a risk of being altogether capotted. I must, therefore, act at all risks, and act with vigour; and this is the general plan of my campaign, subject always to be altered according to circumstances. I have obtained—I may say purchased—Mowbray’s consent to address his sister. I have this advantage, that if she agrees to take me, she will for ever put a stop to all disagreeable reports and recollections, founded on her former conduct. In that case I secure the Nettlewood property, and am ready to wage war for my paternal estate. Indeed, I firmly believe that, should this happy consummation take place, Monsieur Martigny will be too much heart-broken to make further fight, but will e’en throw helve after hatchet, and run to hide himself, after the fashion of a true lover, in some desert beyond seas.

‘But supposing the lady has the bad taste to be obstinate, and will none of me, I still think that her happiness, or her peace of mind, will be as dear to Martigny as Gibraltar is to the Spaniards, and that he will sacrifice a great deal to induce me to give up my pretensions. Now, I shall want some one to act as my agent in communicating with this fellow; for I

will not deny that my old appetite for cutting his throat may awaken suddenly, were I to hold personal intercourse with him. Come thou, therefore, without delay, and hold my back-hand. Come, for you know me, and that I never left a kindness unrewarded. To be specific, you shall have means to pay off a certain inconvenient mortgage, without troubling the tribe of Issachar, if you will but be true to me in this matter. Come, therefore, without further apologies or further delay. There shall, I give you my word, neither be risk or offence in the part of the drama which I intend to commit to your charge.

'Talking of the drama, we had a miserable attempt at a sort of bastard theatricals at Mowbray's rat-gnawed mansion. There were two things worth noticing — one, that I lost all the courage on which I pique myself, and fairly fled from the pit, rather than present myself before Miss Clara Mowbray, when it came to the push. And upon this I pray you to remark, that I am a person of singular delicacy and modesty, instead of being the Drawcansir and daredevil that you would make of me. The other memorable is of a more delicate nature, respecting the conduct of a certain fair lady, who seemed determined to fling herself at my head. There is a wonderful degree of free-masonry among us folk of spirit ; and it is astonishing how soon we can place ourselves on a footing with neglected wives and discontented daughters. If you come not soon, one of the rewards held out to you in my former letter will certainly not be forthcoming. No schoolboy keeps gingerbread for his comrade, without feeling a desire to nibble at it ; so, if you appear not to look after your own interest, say you had fair warning. For my own part, I am rather embarrassed than gratified by the prospect of such an affair, when I have on the tapis another of a different nature. This enigma I will explain at meeting.

'Thus finishes my long communication. If my motives of action do not appear explicit, think in what a maze fortune has involved me, and how much must necessarily depend on the chapter of accidents.

'Yesterday I may be said to have opened my siege, for I presented myself before Clara. I had no very flattering reception ; that was of little consequence, for I did not expect one. By alarming her fears, I made an impression thus far, that she acquiesces in my appearing before her as her brother's guest, and this is no small point gained. She will become accustomed

to look on me, and will remember with less bitterness the trick which I played her formerly ; while I, on the other hand, by a similar force of habit, will get over certain awkward feelings with which I have been compunctiously visited whenever I look upon her. — Adieu ! Health and brotherhood.

‘Thine,
‘ETHERINGTON.’

CHAPTER XXVII

The Reply

Thou bear'st a precious burden, gentle post,
Nitre and sulphur. See that it explode not !

Old Play.

‘ I HAVE received your two long letters, my dear Etherington, with equal surprise and interest ; for what I knew of your Scottish adventures before was by no means sufficient to prepare me for a statement so perversely complicated. The *ignis fatuus* which, you say, governed your father, seems to have ruled the fortunes of your whole house, there is so much eccentricity in all that you have told me. But *n’importe*, Etherington, you were my friend — you held me up when I was completely broken down ; and, whatever you may think, my services are at your command much more from reflections on the past than hopes for the future. I am no speechmaker, but this you may rely on while I continue to be Harry Jekyl. You have deserved some love at my hands, Etherington, and you have it.

‘ Perhaps I love you the better since your perplexities have become known to me ; for, my dear Etherington, you were before too much an object of envy to be entirely an object of affection. What a happy fellow ! was the song of all who named you, — rank, and a fortune to maintain it ; luck sufficient to repair all the waste that you could make in your income, and skill to back that luck, or supply it, should it for a moment fail you ; the cards turning up as if to your wish ; the dice rolling, it almost seemed, at your wink ; it was rather your look than the touch of your cue that sent the ball into the pocket. You seemed to have fortune in chains, and a man of less honour would have been almost suspected of helping his luck by a little art. You won every bet ; and the instant that you were interested, one might have named the winning horse

should be difficult for the young lady to prove the imposition put upon her — for, that being admitted, the marriage certainly goes for nothing. At least, the only use you can make of it would be to drive her into a more formal union, for fear of having this whole unpleasant discussion brought into a court of law; and in this, with all the advantages you possess, joined to your own arts of persuasion and her brother's influence, I should think you very likely to succeed. All women are necessarily the slaves of their reputation. I have known some who have given up their virtue to preserve their character, which is, after all, only the shadow of it. I therefore would not conceive it difficult for Clara Mowbray to persuade herself to become a countess, rather than be the topic of conversation for all Britain, while a lawsuit betwixt you is in dependence; and that may be for the greater part of both your lives.

‘But, in Miss Mowbray’s state of mind, it may require time to bring her to such a conclusion; and I fear you will be thwarted in your operations by your rival—I will not offend you by calling him your brother. Now, it is here that I think with pleasure I may be of some use to you — under this special condition, that there shall be no thoughts of farther violence taking place between you. However you may have smoothed over your rencontre to yourself, there is no doubt that the public would have regarded any accident which might have befallen on that occasion as a crime of the deepest dye, and that the law would have followed it with the most severe punishment. And for all that I have said of my serviceable disposition, I would fain stop short on this side of the gallows — my neck is too long already. Without a jest, Etherington, you must be ruled by counsel in this matter. I detect your hatred to this man in every line of your letter, even when you write with the greatest coolness; even where there is an affectation of gaiety, I read your sentiments on this subject; and they are such as — I will not preach to you — I will not say a good man — but such as every wise man — every man who wishes to live on fair terms with the world, and to escape general malediction, and perhaps a violent death, where all men will clap their hands and rejoice at the punishment of the fratricide — would, with all possible speed, eradicate from his breast. My services, therefore, if they are worth your acceptance, are offered on the condition that this unholy hatred be subdued with the utmost force of your powerful mind, and that you avoid everything which can possibly lead to such a

me, or the route which you are about to take. On the purpose of your journey, it is unnecessary to recommend silence. I know not whether such doubts are natural to all who have secret measures to pursue, or whether nature has given me an unusual share of anxious suspicion; but I cannot divest myself of the idea that I am closely watched by some one whom I cannot discover. Although I concealed my purpose of coming hither from all mankind but you, whom I do not for an instant suspect of blabbing, yet it was known to this Martigny, and he is down here before me. Again, I said not a word — gave not a hint to any one of my views towards Clara, yet the tattling people here had spread a report of a marriage depending between us even before I could make the motion to her brother. To be sure, in such society there is nothing talked of but marrying and giving in marriage; and this, which alarms me, as connected with my own private purposes, may be a bare rumour, arising out of the gossip of the place. Yet I feel like the poor woman in the old story, who felt herself watched by an eye that glared upon her from behind the tapestry.

‘I should have told you in my last that I had been recognised at a public entertainment by the old clergyman who pronounced the matrimonial blessing on Clara and me nearly eight years ago. He insisted upon addressing me by the name of Valentine Bulmer, under which I was then best known. It did not suit me at present to put him into my confidence, so I cut him, Harry, as I would an old pencil. The task was the less difficult, that I had to do with one of the most absent men that ever dreamed with his eyes open. I verily believe he might be persuaded that the whole transaction was a vision, and that he had never in reality seen me before. Your pious rebuke, therefore, about what I told him formerly concerning the lovers is quite thrown away. After all, if what I said was not accurately true, as I certainly believe it was an exaggeration, it was all St. Francis of Martigny’s fault, I suppose. I am sure he had love and opportunity on his side.

‘Here you have a postscript, Harry, longer than the letter, but it must conclude with the same burden — Come, and come quickly.’

CHAPTER XXVIII

The Fright

As shakes the bough of trembling leaf,
When sudden whirlwinds rise ;
As stands aghast the warrior chief,
When his base army flies.

IT had been settled by all who took the matter into consideration that the fidgety, fiery old Nabob would soon quarrel with his landlady, Mrs. Dods, and become impatient of his residence at St. Ronan's. A man so kind to himself and so inquisitive about the affairs of others could have, it was supposed, a limited sphere for gratification either of his tastes or of his curiosity in the Aultoun of St. Ronan's; and many a time the precise day and hour of his departure were fixed by the idlers at the Spa. But still old Touchwood appeared amongst them when the weather permitted, with his nut-brown visage, his throat carefully wrapped up in an immense Indian kerchief, and his gold-headed cane, which he never failed to carry over his shoulder—his short, but stout, limbs and his active step showing plainly that he bore it rather as a badge of dignity than a means of support. There he stood, answering shortly and gruffly to all questions proposed to him, and making his remarks aloud upon the company, with great indifference as to the offence which might be taken; and as soon as the ancient priestess had handed him his glass of the salutiferous water, turned on his heel with a brief 'Good-morning,' and either marched back to hide himself in the manse with his crony Mr. Cargill or to engage in some hobbyhorsical pursuit connected with his neighbours in the Aultoun.

The truth was, that the honest gentleman having, so far as Mrs. Dods would permit, put matters to rights within her residence, wisely abstained from pushing his innovations any

farther, aware that it is not every stone which is capable of receiving the last degree of polish. He next set himself about putting Mr. Cargill's house into order ; and without leave asked or given by that reverend gentleman, he actually accomplished as wonderful a reformation in the manse as could have been effected by a benevolent brownie. The floors were sometimes swept, the carpets were sometimes shaken, the plates and dishes were cleaner ; there was tea and sugar in the tea-chest, and a joint of meat at proper times was to be found in the larder. The elder maid-servant wore a good stuff gown, the younger snooded up her hair, and now went about the house a damsel so trig and neat that some said she was too handsome for the service of a bachelor divine ; and others, that they saw no business so old a fool as the Nabob had to be meddling with a lassie's busking. But for such evil bruits Mr. Touchwood cared not, even if he happened to hear of them, which was very doubtful. Add to all these changes, that the garden was weeded and the glebe was regularly laboured.

The talisman by which all this desirable alteration was wrought consisted partly in small presents, partly in constant attention. The liberality of the singular old gentleman gave him a perfect right to scold when he saw things wrong ; the domestics, who had fallen into total sloth and indifference, began to exert themselves under Mr. Touchwood's new system of rewards and surveillance ; and the minister, half-unconscious of the cause, reaped the advantage of the exertions of his busy friend. Sometimes he lifted his head when he heard workmen thumping and bouncing in the neighbourhood of his study, and demanded the meaning of the clatter which annoyed him ; but on receiving for answer that it was by order of Mr. Touchwood, he resumed his labours, under the persuasion that all was well.

But even the Augean task of putting the manse in order did not satisfy the gigantic activity of Mr. Touchwood. He aspired to universal dominion in the Aultoun of St. Ronan's ; and, like most men of an ardent temper, he contrived, in a great measure, to possess himself of the authority which he longed after. Then was there war waged by him with all the petty but perpetual nuisances which infest a Scottish town of the old stamp : then was the hereditary dunghill, which had reeked before the window of the cottage for fourscore years, transported behind the house ; then was the broken wheelbarrow or unserviceable cart removed out of the footpath ; the old hat or blue

petticoat taken from the window into which it had been stuffed to 'expel the winter's flaw' was consigned to the gutter, and its place supplied by good perspicuous glass. The means by which such reformation was effected were the same as resorted to in the manse—money and admonition. The latter given alone would have met little attention—perhaps would have provoked opposition; but, softened and sweetened by a little present to assist the reform recommended, it sunk into the hearts of the hearers and in general overcame their objections. Besides, an opinion of the Nabob's wealth was high among the villagers; and an idea prevailed amongst them that, notwithstanding his keeping no servants or equipage, he was able to purchase, if he pleased, half the land in the country. It was not grand carriages and fine liveries that made heavy purses, they rather helped to lighten them; and they said, who pretended to know what they were talking about, that old Turnpenny, and Mr. Bindloose to boot, would tell down more money on Mr. Touchwood's mere word than upon the joint bond of half the fine folk at the Well. Such an opinion smoothed everything before the path of one who showed himself neither averse to give nor to lend; and it by no means diminished the reputation of his wealth, that in transactions of business he was not carelessly negligent of his interest, but plainly showed he understood the value of what he was parting with. Few, therefore, cared to withstand the humours of a whimsical old gentleman who had both the will and the means of obliging those disposed to comply with his fancies; and thus the singular stranger contrived, in the course of a brief space of days or weeks, to place the villagers more absolutely at his devotion than they had been to the pleasure of any individual since their ancient lords had left the Aultoun. The power of the baron-bailie himself, though the office was vested in the person of old Meiklewham, was a subordinate jurisdiction compared to the voluntary allegiance which the inhabitants paid to Mr. Touchwood.

There were, however, recusants, who declined the authority thus set up amongst them, and, with the characteristic obstinacy of their countrymen, refused to hearken to the words of the stranger, whether they were for good or for evil. These men's dunghills were not removed, nor the stumbling-blocks taken from the footpath, where it passed the front of their houses. And it befell that, while Mr. Touchwood was most eager in abating the nuisances of the village, he had very nearly experi-

enced a frequent fate of great reformers — that of losing his life by means of one of those enormities which as yet had subsisted in spite of all his efforts.

The Nabob, finding his time after dinner hang somewhat heavy on his hand, and the moon being tolerably bright, had, one harvest evening, sought his usual remedy for dispelling *ennui* by a walk to the manse, where he was sure that, if he could not succeed in engaging the minister himself in some disputation, he would at least find something in the establishment to animadvert upon and to restore to order.

Accordingly, he had taken the opportunity to lecture the younger of the minister's lasses upon the duty of wearing shoes and stockings; and, as his advice came fortified by a present of six pair of white cotton hose and two pair of stout leathern shoes, it was received, not with respect only, but with gratitude, and the chuck under the chin that rounded up the oration, while she opened the outer door for his honour, was acknowledged with a blush and a giggle. Nay, so far did Grizzly carry her sense of Mr. Touchwood's kindness, that, observing the moon was behind a cloud, she very carefully offered to escort him to the Cleikum Inn with a lantern, in case he should 'come to some harm by the gate.' This the traveller's independent spirit scorned to listen to; and, having briefly assured her that he had walked the streets of Paris and of Madrid whole nights without such an accommodation, he stoutly strode off on his return to his lodgings.

An accident, however, befell him, which, unless the police of Madrid and Paris be belied, might have happened in either of those two splendid capitals as well as in the miserable Aultoun of St. Ronan's. Before the door of Saunders Jaup, a feuar of some importance, 'who held his land free, and caredna a boddle for any one,' yawned that odoriferous gulf, ycleped, in Scottish phrase, the jawhole; in other words, an uncovered common sewer. The local situation of this receptacle of filth was well known to Mr. Touchwood; for Saunders Jaup was at the very head of those who held out for the practices of their fathers, and still maintained those ancient and unsavoury customs which our traveller had in so many instances succeeded in abating. Guided, therefore, by his nose, the Nabob made a considerable circuit to avoid the displeasure and danger of passing this filthy puddle at the nearest, and by that means fell upon Scylla as he sought to avoid Charybdis. In plain language, he approached so near the bank of a little rivulet,

which in that place passed betwixt the footpath and the horse-road, that he lost his footing, and fell into the channel of the streamlet from a height of three or four feet. It was thought that the noise of his fall, or at least his call for assistance, must have been heard in the house of Saunders Jaup; but that honest person was, according to his own account, at that time engaged in the exercise of the evening — an excuse which passed current, although Saunders was privately heard to allege that the town would have been the quieter 'if the auld, meddling busybody had bidden still in the burn for gude and a'.'

But Fortune had provided better for poor Touchwood, whose foibles, as they arose out of the most excellent motives, would have ill deserved so severe a fate. A passenger, who heard him shout for help, ventured cautiously to the side of the bank, down which he had fallen; and, after ascertaining the nature of the ground as carefully as the darkness permitted, was at length, and not without some effort, enabled to assist him out of the channel of the rivulet.

'Are you hurt materially?' said this good Samaritan to the object of his care.

'No — no — d—n it — no,' said Touchwood, extremely angry at his disaster and the cause of it. 'Do you think I, who have been at the summit of Mount Athos, where the precipice sinks a thousand feet on the sea, care a farthing about such a fall as this is?'

But, as he spoke, he reeled, and his kind assistant caught him by the arm to prevent his falling.

'I fear you are more hurt than you suppose, sir,' said the stranger; 'permit me to go home along with you.'

'With all my heart,' said Touchwood; 'for, though it is impossible I can need help in such a foolish matter, yet I am equally obliged to you, friend; and if the Cleikum Inn be not out of your road, I will take your arm so far, and thank you to the boot.'

'It is much at your service, sir,' said the stranger; 'indeed, I was thinking to lodge there for the night.'

'I am glad to hear it,' resumed Touchwood; 'you shall be my guest, and I will make them look after you in proper fashion. You seem to be a very civil sort of fellow, and I do not find your arm inconvenient; it is the rheumatism makes me walk so ill — the pest of all that have been in hot climates when they settle among these d—d fogs.'

'Lean as hard and walk as slow as you will, sir,' said the benevolent assistant, 'this is a rough street.'

'Yes, sir, and why is it rough?' answered Touchwood. 'Why, because the old pig-headed fool, Saunders Jaup, will not allow it to be made smooth. There he sits, sir, and obstructs all rational improvement; and, if a man would not fall into his infernal putrid gutter, and so become an abomination to himself and odious to others for his whole life to come, he runs the risk of breaking his neck, as I have done to-night.'

'I am afraid, sir,' said his companion, 'you have fallen on the most dangerous side. You remember Swift's proverb, "The more dirt, the less hurt."'

'But why should there be either dirt or hurt in a well-regulated place?' answered Touchwood. 'Why should not men be able to go about their affairs at night in such a hamlet as this without either endangering necks or noses? Our Scottish magistrates are worth nothing, sir—nothing at all. Oh for a Turkish cadi, now, to trounce the scoundrel; or the mayor of Calcutta to bring him into his court; or were it but an English justice of the peace that is newly included in the commission—they would abate the villain's nuisance with a vengeance on him! But here we are—this is the Cleikum Inn. Hallo—hillock—house! Eppie Anderson!—Beenie Chambermaid!—boy boots!—Mrs. Dods!—are you all of you asleep and dead? Here have I been half murdered, and you let me stand bawling at the door!'

Eppie Anderson came with a light, and so did Beenie Chambermaid with another; but no sooner did they look upon the pair who stood in the porch under the huge sign that swung to and fro with heavy creaking than Beenie screamed, flung away her candle, although a four in the pound and in a newly japanned candlestick, and fled one way, while Eppie Anderson, echoing the yell, brandished her light round her head like a Bacchante flourishing her torch, and ran off in another direction.

'Ay—I must be a bloody spectacle,' said Mr. Touchwood, letting himself fall heavily upon his assistant's shoulder, and wiping his face, which trickled with wet. 'I did not think I had been so seriously hurt; but I find my weakness now: I must have lost much blood.'

'I hope you are still mistaken,' said the stranger; 'but here lies the way to the kitchen; we shall find light there, since no one chooses to bring it to us.'

He assisted the old gentleman into the kitchen, where a lamp, as well as a bright fire, was burning, by the light of which he could easily discern that the supposed blood was only water of the rivulet, and, indeed, none of the cleanest, although much more so than the sufferer would have found it a little lower, where the stream is joined by the superfluities of Saunders Jaup's palladium. Relieved by his new friend's repeated assurances that such was the case, the senior began to bustle up a little, and his companion, desirous to render him every assistance, went to the door of the kitchen to call for a basin and water. Just as he was about to open the door, the voice of Mrs. Dods was heard as she descended the stairs, in a tone of indignation by no means unusual to her, yet mingled at the same time with a few notes that sounded like unto the quaverings of consternation.

'Idle limmers — silly sluts — I'll warrant nane o' ye will ever see ony thing waur than yoursell, ye silly tawpies. Ghaist, indeed! I'll warrant it's some idle dub-skelper frae the Waal, coming after some o' yoursells on nae honest errand. Ghaist, indeed! Haud up the candle, John Ostler. I'se warrant it a twa-handed ghaist, and the door left on the sneck. There's somebody in the kitchen; gang forward wi' the lantern, John Ostler.'

At this critical moment the stranger opened the door of the kitchen, and beheld the dame advancing at the head of her household troops. The hostler and humpbacked postilion, one bearing a stable-lantern and a hay-fork, the other a rushlight and a broom, constituted the advanced guard; Mrs. Dods herself formed the centre, talking loud and brandishing a pair of tongs; while the two maids, like troops not to be much trusted after their recent defeat, followed cowering in the rear. But notwithstanding this admirable disposition, no sooner had the stranger shown his face and pronounced the words 'Mrs. Dods!' than a panic seized the whole array. The advanced guard recoiled in consternation, the hostler upsetting Mrs. Dods in the confusion of his retreat; while she, grappling with him in her terror, secured him by the ears and hair, and they joined their cries together in hideous chorus. The two maidens resumed their former flight, and took refuge in the darksome den entitled their bedroom; while the humpbacked postilion fled like the wind into the stable, and, with professional instinct, began, in the extremity of his terror, to saddle a horse.

Meanwhile, the guest whose appearance had caused this combustion plucked the roaring hostler from above Mrs. Dods, and pushing him away with a hearty slap on the shoulder, proceeded to raise and encourage the fallen landlady, inquiring, at the same time, 'What, in the devil's name, was the cause of all this senseless confusion?'

'And what is the reason, in Heaven's name,' answered the matron, keeping her eyes firmly shut, and still shrewish in her expostulation, though in the very extremity of terror — 'what is the reason that you should come and frighten a decent house, where you met naething, when ye was in the body, but the height of civility?'

'And why should I frighten you, Mrs. Dods? or, in one word, what is the meaning of all this nonsensical terror?'

'Are not you,' said Mrs. Dods, opening her eyes a little as she spoke, 'the ghaist of Francis Tirl?'

'I am Francis Tyrrel, unquestionably, my old friend.'

'I kenn'd it! — I kenn'd it!' answered the honest woman, relapsing into her agony; 'and I think ye might be ashamed of yoursell; that are a ghaist, and have nae better to do than to frighten a puir auld alewife.'

'On my word, I am no ghost, but a living man,' answered Tyrrel.

'Were ye no murdered than?' demanded Mrs. Dods, still in an uncertain voice, and only partially opening her eyes. 'Are ye very sure ye werena murdered?'

'Why, not that ever I heard of, certainly, dame,' replied Tyrrel.

'But *I* shall be murdered presently,' said old Touchwood from the kitchen, where he had hitherto remained a mute auditor of this extraordinary scene — '*I* shall be murdered, unless you fetch me some water without delay.'

'Coming, sir — coming,' answered Dame Dods, her professional reply being as familiar to her as that of poor Francis's 'Anon — anon, sir.' 'As I live by honest reckonings,' said she, fully collecting herself, and giving a glance of more composed temper at Tyrrel, 'I believe it *is* yoursell, Maister Frank, in blood and body after a'. And see if I dinna gie a proper sorting to yon twa silly jauds that garred me mak a bogle of you, and a fule of mysell. Ghaists! my certie, I sall ghaist them. If they had their heads as muckle on their wark as on their daffing, they wad play nae sic pliskies: it's the wanton steed that scaurs at the windlestrae. Ghaists! wha e'er heard of ghaists in an

honest house? Naeboddy need fear bogles that has a conscience void of offence. But I am blythe that MacTurk hasna murdered ye when a' is dune, Maister Francie.'

'Come this way, Mother Dods, if you would not have me do a mischief!' exclaimed Touchwood, grasping a plate which stood on the dresser, as if he were about to heave it at the landlady, by way of recalling her attention.

'For the love of Heaven, dinna break it!' exclaimed the alarmed landlady, knowing that Touchwood's effervescence of impatience sometimes expended itself at the expense of her crockery, though it was afterwards liberally atoned for. 'Lord, sir, are ye out of your wits? it breaks a set, ye ken. God-sake, put down the cheeny plate and try your hand on the delf ware; it will just make as good a jingle. But, Lord haud a grip o' us! now I look at ye, what can hae come ower ye, and what sort of a plight are ye in? Wait till I fetch water and a towel.'

In fact, the miserable guise of her new lodger now overcame the dame's curiosity to inquire after the fate of her earlier acquaintance, and she gave her instant and exclusive attention to Mr. Touchwood, with many exclamations, while aiding him to perform the task of ablution and abstersion. Her two fugitive handmaidens had by this time returned to the kitchen, and endeavoured to suppress a smuggled laugh at the recollection of their mistress's panic by acting very officiously in Mr. Touchwood's service. By dint of washing and drying, the token of the sable stains was at length removed, and the veteran became, with some difficulty, satisfied that he had been more dirtied and frightened than hurt.

Tyrrel, in the meantime, stood looking on with wonder, imagining that he beheld in the features which emerged from a mask of mud the countenance of an old friend. After the operation was ended, he could not help addressing himself to Mr. Touchwood, to demand whether he had not the pleasure to see a friend to whom he had been obliged when at Smyrna for some kindness respecting his money matters.

'Not worth speaking of — not worth speaking of,' said Touchwood, hastily. 'Glad to see you, though — glad to see you. Yes, here I am; you will find me the same good-natured old fool that I was at Smyrna: never look how I am to get in money again, always laying it out. Never mind; it was written in my forehead, as the Turk says. I will go up now and change my dress. You will sup with me when I come

back ; Mrs. Dods will toss us up something. A brandered fowl will be best, Mrs. Dods, with some mushrooms ; and get us a jug of mulled wine—plottie, as you call it—to put the recollection of the old Presbyterian's common sewer out of my head.'

So saying, upstairs marched the traveller to his own apartment, while Tyrrel, seizing upon a candle, was about to do the same.

'Mr. Touchwood is in the Blue Room, Mrs. Dods ; I suppose I may take possession of the yellow one ?'

'Suppose naething about the matter, Maister Francis Tirl, till ye tell me downright where ye have been a' this time, and whether ye hae been murdered or no ?'

'I think you may be pretty well satisfied of that, Mrs. Dods.'

'Troth, and so I am in a sense ; and yet it gars me grue to look upon ye, sae mony days and weeks it has been since I thought ye were rotten in the moulds. And now to see ye standing before me hale and feir, and crying for a bedroom like ither folk !'

'One would almost suppose, my good friend,' said Tyrrel, 'that you were sorry at my having come alive again.'

'It's no for that,' replied Mrs. Dods, who was peculiarly ingenious in the mode of framing and stating what she conceived to be her grievances ; 'but is it no a queer thing for a decent man like yoursell, Maister Tirl, to be leaving your lodgings without a word spoken, and me put to a' these charges in seeking for your dead body, and very near taking my business out of honest Maister Bindloose's hands, because he kenn'd the cantrips of the like of you better than I did ? And than they hae putten up an advertisement down at the Waal yonder, wi' a their names at it, setting ye forth, Maister Francie, as ane of the greatest blackguards unhanged ; and wha, div ye think, is to keep ye in a creditable house, if that's the character ye get ?'

'You may leave that to me, Mrs. Dods—I assure you that matter shall be put to rights to your satisfaction ; and I think, so long as we have known each other, you may take my word that I am not undeserving the shelter of your roof for a single night—I shall ask it no longer—until my character is sufficiently cleared. It was for that purpose chiefly I came back again.'

'Came back again !' said Mrs. Dods. 'I profess ye made

me start, Maister Tirl, and you looking sae pale, too. But I think,' she added, straining after a joke, 'if ye were a ghaist, seeing we are such auld acquaintance, ye wadna wish to spoil my custom, but would just walk decently up and down the auld castle wa's, or maybe down at the kirk yonder; there have been awfu' things done in that kirk and kirkyard—I whiles dinna like to look that way, Maister Francie.'

'I am much of your mind, mistress,' said Tyrrel, with a sigh; 'and, indeed, I do in one sense resemble the apparitions you talk of; for, like them, and to as little purpose, I stalk about scenes where my happiness departed. But I speak riddles to you, Mrs. Dods; the plain truth is, that I met with an accident on the day I last left your house, the effects of which detained me at some distance from St. Ronan's till this very day.'

'Hegh, sirs, and ye were sparing of your trouble, that wadna write a bit line or send a bit message! Ye might hae thought folk wad hae been vexed enough about ye, forbye undertaking journeys and hiring folk to seek for your dead body.'

'I shall willingly pay all reasonable charges which my disappearance may have occasioned,' answered her guest; 'and I assure you, once for all, that my remaining for some time quiet at Marchthorn arose partly from illness and partly from business of a very pressing and particular nature.'

'At Marchthorn!' exclaimed Dame Dods; 'heard ever man the like o' that? And where did ye put up in Marchthorn, an' ane may mak bauld to speer?'

'At the Black Bull,' replied Tyrrel.

'Ay, that's auld Tam Lowrie's—a very decent man, Thamas, and a douce, creditable house—nane of your fliskmahoy's. I am glad ye made choice of sic gude quarters, neighbour; for I am beginning to think ye are but a queer ane: ye look as if butter wadna melt in your mouth, but I sall warrant cheese no choke ye. But I'll thank ye to gang your ways into the parlour, for I am no like to get muckle mair out o' ye, it's like; and ye are standing here just in the gate, when we hae the supper to dish.'

Tyrrel, glad to be released from the examination to which his landlady's curiosity had without ceremony subjected him, walked into the parlour, where he was presently joined by Mr. Touchwood, newly attired, and in high spirits.

'Here comes our supper!' he exclaimed. 'Sit ye down, and

let us see what Mrs. Dods has done for us. I profess, mistress, your plottie is excellent, ever since I taught you to mix the spices in the right proportion.'

'I am glad the plottie pleases ye, sir; but I think I kenn'd gay weel how to make it before I saw your honour. Maister Tirl can tell that, for mony a browst of it I hae brewed lang syne for him and the callant Valentine Bulmer.'

This ill-timed observation extorted a groan from Tyrrel; but the traveller, running on with his own recollections, did not appear to notice his emotion.

'You are a conceited old woman,' said Mr. Touchwood; 'how the devil should any one know how to mix spices so well as he who has been where they grow? I have seen the sun ripening nutmegs and cloves, and here it can hardly fill a peasecod, by Jupiter. Ah, Tyrrel, the merry nights we have had at Smyrna! Gad, I think the gammon and the good wine taste all the better in a land where folks hold them to be sinful indulgences. Gad, I believe many a good Moslem is of the same opinion: that same prohibition of their prophet's gives a flavour to the ham and a relish to the Cyprus. Do you remember old Cogia Hassein, with his green turban? I once played him a trick, and put a pint of brandy into his sherbet. Egad, the old fellow took care never to discover the cheat until he had got to the bottom of the flagon, and then he strokes his long white beard and says, "Ullah kerim,"—that is, "Heaven is merciful," Mrs. Dods—Mr. Tyrrel knows the meaning of it. "Ullah kerim," says he, after he had drunk about a gallon of brandy-punch! "Ullah kerim," says the hypocritical old rogue, as if he had done the finest thing in the world!'

'And what for no? What for shouldna the honest man say a blessing after his drap punch?' demanded Mrs. Dods; 'it was better, I ween, than blasting, and blawing, and swearing, as if folks shouldna be thankful for the creature comforts.'

'Well said, old Dame Dods,' replied the traveller: 'that is a right hostess's maxim, and worthy of Mrs. Quickly herself. Here is to thee, and I pray ye to pledge me before ye leave the room.'

'Troth, I'll pledge naebody the night, Maister Touchwood; for, what wi' the upcast and terror that I got a wee while syne, and what wi' the bit taste that I behoved to take of the plottie while I was making it, my head is sair enough distressed the night already. Maister Tirl, the Yellow Room is ready for ye when ye like; and, gentlemen, as the morn is the Sabbath, I canna be keeping the servant queans out of their beds to wait

on ye ony langer, for they will mak it an excuse for lying till aught o'clock on the Lord's day. So, when your plottie is done, I'll be muckle obliged to ye to light the bedroom candles, and put out the double moulds, and e'en show yoursells to your beds; for douce folks, sic as the like of you, should set an example by ordinary. And so, gude-night to ye baith.'

'By my faith,' said Touchwood, as she withdrew, 'our dame turns as obstinate as a pacha with three tails! We have her gracious permission to finish our mug, however; so here is to your health once more, Mr. Tyrrel, wishing you a hearty welcome to your own country.'

'I thank you, Mr. Touchwood,' answered Tyrrel; 'and I return you the same good wishes, with, as I sincerely hope, a much greater chance of their being realised. You relieved me, sir, at a time when the villainy of an agent, prompted, as I have reason to think, by an active and powerful enemy, occasioned my being, for a time, pressed for funds. I made remittances to the *racion* you dealt with, to acquit myself at least of the pecuniary part of my obligation; but the bills were returned, because, it was stated, you had left Smyrna.'

'Very true — very true — left Smyrna, and here I am in Scotland; as for the bills, we will speak of them another time — something due for picking me out of the gutter.'

'I shall make no deduction on that account,' said Tyrrel, smiling, though in no jocose mood; 'and I beg you not to mistake me. The circumstances of embarrassment under which you found me at Smyrna were merely temporary. I am most able and willing to pay my debt; and, let me add, I am most desirous to do so.'

'Another time — another time,' said Mr. Touchwood — 'time enough before us, Mr. Tyrrel; besides, at Smyrna, you talked of a lawsuit; law is a lick-penny, Mr. Tyrrel — no counsellor like the pound in purse.'

'For my lawsuit,' said Tyrrel, 'I am fully provided.'

'But have you good advice — have you good advice?' said Touchwood; 'answer me that.'

'I have advised with my lawyers,' answered Tyrrel, internally vexed to find that his friend was much disposed to make his generosity upon the former occasion a pretext for prying farther into his affairs now than he thought polite or convenient.

'With your counsel learned in the law — eh, my dear boy? But the advice you should take is of some travelled friend, well acquainted with mankind and the world; some one that has

lived double your years, and is maybe looking out for some bare young fellow that he may do a little good to ; one that might be willing to help you farther than I can pretend to guess ; for, as to your lawyer, you get just your guinea's worth from him — not even so much as the baker's bargain, thirteen to the dozen.'

'I think I should not trouble myself to go far in search of a friend such as you describe,' said Tyrrel, who could not affect to misunderstand the senior's drift, 'when I was near Mr. Peregrine Touchwood ; but the truth is, my affairs are at present so much complicated with those of others, whose secrets I have no right to communicate, that I cannot have the advantage of consulting you or any other friend. It is possible I may be soon obliged to lay aside this reserve, and vindicate myself before the whole public. I will not fail, when that time shall arrive, to take an early opportunity of confidential communication with you.'

'That is right — confidential is the word. No person ever made a confidant of me who repented it. Think what the pacha might have made of it, had he taken my advice and cut through the Isthmus of Suez. Turk and Christian men of all tongues and countries, used to consult old Touchwood, from the building of a mosque down to the settling of an *agio*. But come — good-night — good-night.'

So saying, he took up his bedroom light, and extinguished one of those which stood on the table, nodded to Tyrrel to discharge his share of the duty imposed by Mrs. Dods with the same punctuality, and they withdrew to their several apartments, entertaining very different sentiments of each other.

'A troublesome, inquisitive old gentleman,' said Tyrrel to himself ; 'I remember him narrowly escaping the bastinado at Smyrna for thrusting his advice on the Turkish *cadi* — and then I lie under a considerable obligation to him, giving him a sort of right to annoy me. Well, I must parry his impertinence as I can.'

'A shy cock this Frank Tyrrel,' thought the traveller — 'a very complete dodger ! But no matter — I shall wind him, were he to double like a fox ; I am resolved to make his matters my own, and if I cannot carry him through, I know not who can.'

Having formed this philanthropic resolution, Mr. Touchwood threw himself into bed, which luckily declined exactly at the right angle, and, full of self-complacency, consigned himself to slumber.

CHAPTER XXIX

Mediation

So, begone !
We will not now be troubled with reply ;
We offer fair, take it advisedly.

King Henry IV. Part I.

IT had been the purpose of Tyrrel, by rising and breakfasting early, to avoid again meeting Mr. Touchwood, having upon his hands a matter in which that officious gentleman's interference was likely to prove troublesome. His character, he was aware, had been assailed at the Spa in the most public manner, and in the most public manner he was resolved to demand redress, conscious that whatever other important concerns had brought him to Scotland must necessarily be postponed to the vindication of his honour. He was determined, for this purpose, to go down to the rooms when the company was assembled at the breakfast hour, and had just taken his hat to set out, when he was interrupted by Mrs. Dods, who, announcing 'a gentleman that was speering for him,' ushered into the chamber a very fashionable young man in a military surtout, covered with silk lace and fur, and wearing a foraging-cap—a dress now too familiar to be distinguished, but which at that time was used only by geniuses of a superior order. The stranger was neither handsome nor plain, but had in his appearance a good deal of pretension, and the cool easy superiority which belongs to high breeding. On his part, he surveyed Tyrrel ; and, as his appearance differed, perhaps, from that for which the exterior of the Cleikum Inn had prepared him, he abated something of the air with which he had entered the room, and politely announced himself as Captain Jekyl, of the — Guards, presenting, at the same time, his ticket.

'He presumed he spoke to Mr. Martigny ?'

'To Mr. Francis Tyrrel, sir,' replied Tyrrel, drawing him-

self up; 'Martigny was my mother's name — I have never borne it.'

'I am not here for the purpose of disputing that point, Mr. Tyrrel, though I am not entitled to admit what my principal's information leads him to doubt.'

'Your principal, I presume, is Sir Bingo Binks?' said Tyrrel. 'I have not forgotten that there is an unfortunate affair between us.'

'I have not the honour to know Sir Bingo Binks,' said Captain Jekyl. 'I come on the part of the Earl of Etherington.'

Tyrrel stood silent for a moment, and then said, 'I am at a loss to know what the gentleman who calls himself Earl of Etherington can have to say to me through the medium of such a messenger as yourself, Captain Jekyl. I should have supposed that, considering our unhappy relationship, and the terms on which we stand towards each other, the lawyers were the fitter negotiators between us.'

'Sir,' said Captain Jekyl, 'you are misunderstanding my errand. I am come on no message of hostile import from Lord Etherington. I am aware of the connexion betwixt you, which would render such an office altogether contradictory to common sense and the laws of nature; and I assure you, I would lay down my life rather than be concerned in an affair so unnatural. I would act, if possible, as a mediator betwixt you.'

They had hitherto remained standing. Mr. Tyrrel now offered his guest a seat; and having assumed one himself, he broke the awkward pause which ensued by observing, 'I should be happy, after experiencing such a long course of injustice and persecution from your friend, to learn, even at this late period, Captain Jekyl, anything which can make me think better either of him or of his purpose towards me and towards others.'

'Mr. Tyrrel,' said Captain Jekyl, 'you must allow me to speak with candour. There is too great a stake betwixt your brother and you to permit you to be friends; but I do not see it is necessary that you should therefore be mortal enemies.'

'I am not my brother's enemy, Captain Jekyl,' said Tyrrel — 'I have never been so. His friend I cannot be, and he knows but too well the insurmountable barrier which his own conduct has placed between us.'

'I am aware,' said Captain Jekyl, slowly and expressively, 'generally, at least, of the particulars of your unfortunate disagreement.'

'If so,' said Tyrrel, colouring, 'you must be also aware with what extreme pain I feel myself compelled to enter on such a subject with a total stranger — a stranger, too, the friend and confidant of one who — But I will not hurt your feelings, Captain Jekyl, but rather endeavour to suppress my own. In one word, I beg to be favoured with the import of your communication, as I am obliged to go down to the Spa this morning, in order to put to rights some matters there which concern me nearly.'

'If you mean the cause of your absence from an appointment with Sir Bingo Binks,' said Captain Jekyl, 'the matter has been already completely explained. I pulled down the offensive placard with my own hand, and rendered myself responsible for your honour to any one who should presume to hold it in future doubt.'

'Sir,' said Tyrrel, very much surprised, 'I am obliged to you for your intention, the more so as I am ignorant how I have merited such interference. It is not, however, quite satisfactory to me, because I am accustomed to be the guardian of my own honour.'

'An easy task, I presume, in all cases, Mr. Tyrrel,' answered Jekyl, 'but peculiarly so in the present, when you will find no one so hardy as to assail it. My interference, indeed, would have been unjustifiably officious, had I not been at the moment undertaking a commission implying confidential intercourse with you. For the sake of my own character, it became necessary to establish yours. I know the truth of the whole affair from my friend, the Earl of Etherington, who ought to thank Heaven so long as he lives, that saved him on that occasion from the commission of a very great crime.'

'Your friend, sir, has had, in the course of his life, much to thank Heaven for, but more for which to ask God's forgiveness.'

'I am no divine, sir,' replied Captain Jekyl, with spirit; 'but I have been told that the same may be said of most men alive.'

'I, at least, cannot dispute it,' said Tyrrel; 'but to proceed. Have you found yourself at liberty, Captain Jekyl, to deliver to the public the whole particulars of a *rencontre* so singular as that which took place between your friend and me?'

'I have not, sir,' said Jekyl: 'I judged it a matter of great delicacy, and which each of you had the like interest to preserve secret.'

'May I beg to know, then,' said Tyrrel, 'how it was possible

for you to vindicate my absence from Sir Bingo's rendezvous otherwise ?'

'It was only necessary, sir, to pledge my word as a gentleman and a man of honour, characters in which I am pretty well known to the world, that, to my certain personal knowledge, you were hurt in an affair with a friend of mine, the further particulars of which prudence required should be sunk into oblivion. I think no one will venture to dispute my word, or to require more than my assurance. If there should be any one very hard of faith on the occasion, I shall find a way to satisfy him. In the meanwhile, your outlawry has been rescinded in the most honourable manner ; and Sir Bingo, in consideration of his share in giving rise to reports so injurious to you, is desirous to drop all further proceedings in his original quarrel, and hopes the whole matter will be forgot and forgiven on all sides.'

'Upon my word, Captain Jekyl,' answered Tyrrel, 'you lay me under the necessity of acknowledging obligation to you. You have cut a knot which I should have found it very difficult to unloose ; for I frankly confess that, while I was determined not to remain under the stigma put upon me, I should have had great difficulty in clearing myself, without mentioning circumstances which, were it only for the sake of my father's memory, should be buried in eternal oblivion. I hope your friend feels no continued inconvenience from his hurt ?'

'His lordship is nearly quite recovered,' said Jekyl.

'And I trust he did me the justice to own that, so far as my will was concerned, I am totally guiltless of the purpose of hurting him ?'

'He does you full justice in that and everything else,' replied Jekyl ; 'regrets the impetuosity of his own temper, and is determined to be on his guard against it in future.'

'That,' said Tyrrel, 'is so far well ; and now, may I ask once more, what communication you have to make to me on the part of your friend ? Were it from any one but him, whom I have found so uniformly false and treacherous, your own fairness and candour would induce me to hope that this unnatural quarrel might be in some sort ended by your mediation.'

'I then proceed, sir, under more favourable auspices than I expected,' said Captain Jekyl, 'to enter on my commission. You are about to commence a lawsuit, Mr. Tyrrel, if fame does not wrong you, for the purpose of depriving your brother of his estate and title.'

'The case is not fairly stated, Captain Jekyl,' replied Tyrrel : 'I commence a lawsuit, when I do commence it, for the sake of ascertaining my own just rights.'

'It comes to the same thing eventually,' said the mediator. 'I am not called upon to decide upon the justice of your claims, but they are, you will allow, newly started. The late Countess of Etherington died in possession — open and undoubted possession — of her rank in society.'

'If she had no real claim to it, sir,' replied Tyrrel, 'she had more than justice who enjoyed it so long ; and the injured lady whose claims were postponed had just so much less. But this is no point for you and me to discuss between us — it must be tried elsewhere.'

'Proofs, sir, of the strongest kind will be necessary to overthrow a right so well established in public opinion as that of the present possessor of the title of Etherington.'

Tyrrel took a paper from his pocket-book, and, handing it to Captain Jekyl, only answered, 'I have no thoughts of asking you to give up the cause of your friend ; but methinks the documents of which I give you a list may shake your opinion of it.'

Captain Jekyl read, muttering to himself, "'Certificate of marriage, by the Rev. Zadock Kemp, chaplain to the British Embassy at Paris, between Marie de Bellroche, Comtesse de Martigny, and the Right Honourable John Lord Oakendale. Letters between John Earl of Etherington and his lady, under the title of Madame de Martigny. Certificate of baptism. Declaration of the Earl of Etherington on his death-bed.'" All this is very well, but may I ask you, Mr. Tyrrel, if it is really your purpose to go to extremity with your brother ?'

'He has forgot that he is one : he has lifted his hand against my life.'

'You have shed his blood — twice shed it,' said Jekyl ; 'the world will not ask which brother gave the offence, but which received, which inflicted, the severest wound.'

'Your friend has inflicted one on me, sir,' said Tyrrel, 'that will bleed while I have the power of memory.'

'I understand you, sir,' said Captain Jekyl : 'you mean the affair of Miss Mowbray ?'

'Spare me on that subject, sir !' said Tyrrel. 'Hitherto I have disputed my most important rights — rights which involved my rank in society, my fortune, the honour of my mother — with something like composure ; but do not say more on the

topic you have touched upon, unless you would have before you a madman! Is it possible for you, sir, to have heard even the outline of this story, and to imagine that I can ever reflect on the cold-blooded and most inhuman stratagem which this friend of yours prepared for two unfortunates, without ——' He started up, and walked impetuously to and fro. 'Since the fiend himself interrupted the happiness of perfect innocence, there was never such an act of treachery — never such schemes of happiness destroyed — never such inevitable misery prepared for two wretches who had the idiocy to repose perfect confidence in him! Had there been passion in his conduct, it had been the act of a man — a wicked man, indeed, but still a human creature, acting under the influence of human feelings — but his was the deed of a calm, cold, calculating demon, actuated by the basest and most sordid motives of self-interest, joined, as I firmly believe, to an early and inveterate hatred of one whose claims he considered as at variance with his own.'

'I am sorry to see you in such a temper,' said Captain Jekyl, calmly. 'Lord Etherington, I trust, acted on very different motives than those you impute to him; and if you will but listen to me, perhaps something may be struck out which may accommodate these unhappy disputes.'

'Sir,' said Tyrrel, sitting down again, 'I will listen to you with calmness, as I would remain calm under the probe of a surgeon tenting a festered wound. But when you touch me to the quick — when you prick the very nerve, you cannot expect me to endure without wincing.'

'I will endeavour, then, to be as brief in the operation as I can,' replied Captain Jekyl, who possessed the advantage of the most admirable composure during the whole conference. 'I conclude, Mr. Tyrrel, that the peace, happiness, and honour of Miss Mowbray are dear to you?'

'Who dare impeach her honour?' said Tyrrel, fiercely; then checking himself, added, in a more moderate tone, but one of deep feeling, 'They are dear to me, sir, as my eyesight.'

'My friend holds them in equal regard,' said the captain; 'and has come to the resolution of doing her the most ample justice.'

'He can do her justice no otherwise than by ceasing to haunt this neighbourhood, to think, to speak, even to dream of her.'

'Lord Etherington thinks otherwise,' said Captain Jekyl: 'he believes that, if Miss Mowbray has sustained any wrong at his hands, which, of course, I am not called upon to admit, it

will be best repaired by the offer to share with her his title, his rank, and his fortune.'

'His title, rank, and fortune, sir, are as much a falsehood as he is himself,' said Tyrrel, with violence. 'Marry Clara Mowbray! — never!'

'My friend's fortune, you will observe,' replied Jekyl, 'does not rest entirely upon the event of the lawsuit with which you, Mr. Tyrrel, now threaten him. Deprive him, if you can, of the Oakendale estate, he has still a large patrimony by his mother; and besides, as to his marriage with Clara Mowbray, he conceives that, unless it should be the lady's wish to have the ceremony repeated, to which he is most desirous to defer his own opinion, they have only to declare that it has already passed between them.'

'A trick, sir!' said Tyrrel — 'a vile, infamous trick! of which the lowest wretch in Newgate would be ashamed — the imposition of one person for another.'

'Of that, Mr. Tyrrel, I have seen no evidence whatever. The clergyman's certificate is clear: Francis Tyrrel is united to Clara Mowbray in the holy bands of wedlock — such is the tenor; there is a copy — nay, stop one instant, if you please, sir. You say there was an imposition in the case; I have no doubt but you speak what you believe, and what Miss Mowbray told you. She was surprised — forced in some measure from the husband she had just married — ashamed to meet her former lover, to whom, doubtless, she had made many a vow of love, and ne'er a true one — what wonder that, unsupported by her bridegroom, she should have changed her tone, and thrown all the blame of her own inconstancy on the absent swain? A woman, at a pinch so critical, will make the most improbable excuse, rather than be found guilty on her own confession.'

'There must be no jesting in this case,' said Tyrrel, his cheek becoming pale and his voice altered with passion.

'I am quite serious, sir,' replied Jekyl; 'and there is no law-court in Britain that would take the lady's word — all she has to offer, and that in her own cause — against a whole body of evidence, direct and circumstantial, showing that she was by her own free consent married to the gentleman who now claims her hand. Forgive me, sir — I see you are much agitated. I do not mean to dispute your right of believing what you think is most credible; I only use the freedom of pointing out to you the impression which the evidence is likely to make on the minds of indifferent persons.'

'Your friend,' answered Tyrrel, affecting a composure which, however, he was far from possessing, 'may think by such arguments to screen his villainy; but it cannot avail him: the truth is known to Heaven—it is known to me; and there is, besides, one indifferent witness upon earth who can testify that the most abominable imposition was practised on Miss Mowbray.'

'You mean her cousin—Hannah Irwin, I think, is her name,' answered Jekyl; 'you see I am fully acquainted with all the circumstances of the case. But where is Hannah Irwin to be found?'

'She will appear, doubtless, in Heaven's good time, and to the confusion of him who now imagines the only witness of his treachery—the only one who could tell the truth of this complicated mystery—either no longer lives, or, at least, cannot be brought forward against him, to the ruin of his schemes. Yes, sir, that slight observation of yours has more than explained to me why your friend, or, to call him by his true name, Mr. Valentine Bulmer, has not commenced his machinations sooner, and also why he has commenced them now. He thinks himself certain that Hannah Irwin is not now in Britain, or to be produced in a court of justice; he may find himself mistaken.'

'My friend seems perfectly confident of the issue of his cause,' answered Jekyl; 'but for the lady's sake, he is most unwilling to prosecute a suit which must be attended with so many circumstances of painful exposure.'

'Exposure, indeed!' answered Tyrrel, 'thanks to the traitor who laid a mine so fearful, and who now affects to be reluctant to fire it. Oh! how I am bound to curse that affinity that restrains my hands! I would be content to be the meanest and vilest of society for one hour of vengeance on this unexampled hypocrite! One thing is certain, sir: your friend will have no living victim. His persecution will kill Clara Mowbray, and fill up the cup of his crimes with the murder of one of the sweetest——I shall grow a woman, if I say more on the subject!'

'My friend,' said Jekyl, 'since you like best to have him so defined, is as desirous as you can be to spare the lady's feelings; and with that view, not reverting to former passages, he has laid before her brother a proposal of alliance, with which Mr. Mowbray is highly pleased.'

'Ha!' said Tyrrel, starting. 'And the lady?'

'And the lady so far proved favourable as to consent that Lord Etherington shall visit Shaws Castle.'

'Her consent must have been extorted!' exclaimed Tyrrel.

'It was given voluntarily,' said Jekyl, 'as I am led to understand; unless, perhaps, in so far as the desire to veil these very unpleasing transactions may have operated, I think naturally enough, to induce her to sink them in eternal secrecy, by accepting Lord Etherington's hand. I see, sir, I give you pain, and am sorry for it. I have no title to call upon you for any exertion of generosity; but, should such be Miss Mowbray's sentiments, is it too much to expect of you, that you will not compromise the lady's honour by insisting upon former claims, and opening up disreputable transactions so long past?'

'Captain Jekyl,' said Tyrrel, solemnly, 'I have no claims. Whatever I might have had were cancelled by the act of treachery through which your friend endeavoured too successfully to supplant me. Were Clara Mowbray as free from her pretended marriage as law could pronounce her, still with me — *me*, at least, of all men in the world — the obstacle must ever remain, that the nuptial benediction has been pronounced over her and the man whom I must for once call *brother*.' He stopped at that word, as if it had cost him agony to pronounce it, and then resumed: 'No, sir, I have no views of personal advantage in this matter; they have been long annihilated. But I will not permit Clara Mowbray to become the wife of a villain. I will watch over her with thoughts as spotless as those of her guardian angel. I have been the cause of all the evil she has sustained. I first persuaded her to quit the path of duty; I, of all men who live, am bound to protect her from the misery — from the guilt — which must attach to her as this man's wife. I will never believe that she wishes it. I will never believe that, in calm mind and sober reason, she can be brought to listen to such a guilty proposal. But her mind, alas! is not of the firm texture it once could boast; and your friend knows well how to press on the spring of every passion that can agitate and alarm her. Threats of exposure may extort her consent to this most unfitting match, if they do not indeed drive her to suicide, which I think the most likely termination. I will, therefore, be strong where she is weak. Your friend, sir, must at least strip his proposals of their fine gilding. I will satisfy Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's of his false pretences both to rank and fortune; and I rather think he will protect his sister against the claim of a needy profligate, though he might be dazzled with the alliance of a wealthy peer.'

'Your cause, sir, is not yet won,' answered Jekyl; 'and when

it is, your brother will retain property enough to entitle him to marry a greater match than Miss Mowbray, besides the large estate of Nettlewood, to which that alliance must give him right. But I would wish to make some accommodation between you if it were possible. You profess, Mr. Tyrrel, to lay aside all selfish wishes and views in this matter, and to look entirely to Miss Mowbray's safety and happiness ?'

'Such, upon my honour, is the exclusive purpose of my interference : I would give all I am worth to procure her an hour of quiet, for happiness she will never know again.'

'Your anticipations of Miss Mowbray's distress,' said Jekyl, 'are, I understand, founded upon the character of my friend. You think him a man of light principle, and because he overreached you in a juvenile intrigue, you conclude that now, in his more steady and advanced years, the happiness of the lady in whom you are so much interested ought not to be trusted to him ?'

'There may be other grounds,' said Tyrrel, hastily ; 'but you may argue upon those you have named, as sufficient to warrant my interference.'

'How, then, if I should propose some accommodation of this nature ? Lord Etherington does not pretend to the ardour of a passionate lover. He lives much in the world, and has no desire to quit it. Miss Mowbray's health is delicate, her spirits variable, and retirement would most probably be her choice. Suppose — I am barely putting a supposition — suppose that a marriage between two persons so circumstanced were rendered necessary or advantageous to both — suppose that such a marriage were to secure to one party a large estate — were to ensure the other against all the consequences of an unpleasant exposure — still, both ends might be obtained by the mere ceremony of marriage passing between them. There might be a previous contract of separation, with suitable provisions for the lady, and stipulations by which the husband should renounce all claim to her society. Such things happen every season, if not on the very marriage day, yet before the honeymoon is over. Wealth and freedom would be the lady's, and as much rank as you, sir, supposing your claims just, may think proper to leave them.'

There was a long pause, during which Tyrrel underwent many changes of countenance, which Jekyl watched carefully, without pressing him for an answer. At length he replied, 'There is much in your proposal, Captain Jekyl, which I might be tempted to accede to, as one manner of unloosing this

Gordian knot, and a compromise by which Miss Mowbray's future tranquillity would be in some degree provided for. But I would rather trust a fanged adder than your friend, unless I saw him fettered by the strongest ties of interest. Besides, I am certain the unhappy lady could never survive the being connected with him in this manner, though but for the single moment when they should appear together at the altar. There are other objections ——'

He checked himself, paused, and then proceeded in a calm and self-possessed tone. 'You think, perhaps, even yet, that I have some selfish and interested views in this business; and probably you may feel yourself entitled to entertain the same suspicion towards me which I avowedly harbour respecting every proposition which originates with your friend. I cannot help it: I can but meet these disadvantageous impressions with plain-dealing and honesty; and it is in the spirit of both that I make a proposition to *you*. Your friend is attached to rank, fortune, and worldly advantages in the usual proportion, at least, in which they are pursued by men of the world—this you must admit, and I will not offend you by supposing more.'

'I know few people who do not desire such advantages,' answered Captain Jekyl; 'and I frankly own that he affects no particular degree of philosophic indifference respecting them.'

'Be it so,' answered Tyrrel. 'Indeed, the proposal you have just made indicates that his pretended claim on this young lady's hand is entirely, or almost entirely, dictated by motives of interest, since you are of opinion that he would be contented to separate from her society on the very marriage-day, provided that, in doing so, he was assured of the Nettlewood property.'

'My proposition was unauthorised by my principal,' answered Jekyl; 'but it is needless to deny that its very tenor implies an idea, on my part, that Lord Etherington is no passionate lover.'

'Well, then,' answered Tyrrel, 'consider, sir, and let him consider well, that the estate and rank he now assumes depend upon my will and pleasure—that, if I prosecute the claims of which that scroll makes you aware, he must descend from the rank of an earl into that of a commoner, stripped of by much the better half of his fortune—a diminution which would be far from compensated by the estate of Nettlewood, even if he

could obtain it, which could only be by means of a lawsuit, precarious in the issue, and most dishonourable in its very essence.'

'Well, sir,' replied Jekyl, 'I perceive your argument. What is your proposal?'

'That I will abstain from prosecuting my claim on those honours and that property; that I will leave Valentine Bulmer in possession of his usurped title and ill-deserved wealth; that I will bind myself under the strongest penalties never to disturb his possession of the earldom of Etherington and estates belonging to it — on condition that he allows the woman whose peace of mind he has ruined for ever to walk through the world in her wretchedness, undisturbed either by his marriage-suit or by any claim founded upon his own most treacherous conduct; in short, that he forbear to molest Clara Mowbray, either by his presence, word, letter, or through the intervention of a third party, and be to her in future as if he did not exist.'

'This is a singular offer,' said the captain; 'may I ask if you are serious in making it?'

'I am neither surprised nor offended at the question,' said Tyrrel. 'I am a man, sir, like others, and affect no superiority to that which all men desire the possession of — a certain consideration and station in society. I am no romantic fool to undervalue the sacrifice I am about to make. I renounce a rank which is, and ought to be, the more valuable to me because it involves (he blushed as he spoke) the fame of an honoured mother; because, in failing to claim it, I disobey the commands of a dying father, who wished that by doing so I should declare to the world the penitence which hurried him perhaps to the grave, and the making which public he considered might be some atonement for his errors. From an honoured place in the land, I descend voluntarily to become a nameless exile; for, once certain that Clara Mowbray's peace is assured, Britain no longer holds me. All this I do, sir, not in any idle strain of overheated feeling, but seeing, and knowing, and dearly valuing every advantage which I renounce; yet I do it, and do it willingly, rather than be the cause of farther evil to one on whom I have already brought too — too much.'

His voice, in spite of his exertions, faltered as he concluded the sentence, and a big drop which rose to his eye required him for the moment to turn towards the window.

'I am ashamed of this childishness,' he said, turning again

to Captain Jekyl ; 'if it excites your ridicule, sir, let it be at least a proof of my sincerity.'

'I am far from entertaining such sentiments,' said Jekyl, respectfully, for, in a long train of fashionable follies, his heart had not been utterly hardened — 'very far, indeed. To a proposal so singular as yours, I cannot be expected to answer, except thus far — the character of the peerage is, I believe, indelible, and cannot be resigned or assumed at pleasure. If you are really Earl of Etherington, I cannot see how your resigning the right may avail my friend.'

'You, sir, it might not avail,' said Tyrrel, gravely, 'because you, perhaps, might scorn to exercise a right or hold a title that was not legally yours. But your friend will have no such compunctious visitings. If he can act the earl to the eye of the world, he has already shown that his honour and conscience will be easily satisfied.'

'May I take a copy of the memorandum containing this list of documents,' said Captain Jekyl, 'for the information of my constituent?'

'The paper is at your pleasure, sir,' replied Tyrrel ; 'it is itself but a copy. But Captain Jekyl,' he added, with a sarcastic expression, 'is, it would seem, but imperfectly let into his friend's confidence : he may be assured his principal is completely acquainted with the contents of this paper, and has accurate copies of the deeds to which it refers.'

'I think it scarce possible,' said Jekyl, angrily.

'Possible and certain !' answered Tyrrel. 'My father, shortly preceding his death, sent me — with a most affecting confession of his errors — this list of papers, and acquainted me that he had made a similar communication to your friend. That he did so I have no doubt, however Mr. Bulmer may have thought proper to disguise the circumstance in communication with you. One circumstance, among others, stamps at once his character and confirms me of the danger he apprehended by my return to Britain. He found means, through a scoundrelly agent, who had made me the usual remittances from my father while alive, to withhold those which were necessary for my return from the Levant, and I was obliged to borrow from a friend.'

'Indeed ?' replied Jekyl. 'It is the first time I have heard of these papers. May I inquire where the originals are, and in whose custody ?'

'I was in the East,' answered Tyrrel, 'during my father's

last illness, and these papers were by him deposited with a respectable commercial house with which he was connected. They were inclosed in a cover directed to me, and that again in an envelope addressed to the principal person in their firm.'

'You must be sensible,' said Captain Jekyl, 'that I can scarcely decide on the extraordinary offer which you have been pleased to make, of resigning the claim founded on these documents, unless I had a previous opportunity of examining them.'

'You shall have that opportunity: I will write to have them sent down by the post; they lie but in small compass.'

'This, then,' said the captain, 'sums up all that can be said at present. Supposing these proofs to be of unexceptionable authenticity, I certainly would advise my friend Etherington to put to sleep a claim so important as yours, even at the expense of resigning his matrimonial speculation. I presume you design to abide by your offer?'

'I am not in the habit of altering my mind, still less of retracting my word,' said Tyrrel, somewhat haughtily.

'We part friends, I hope?' said Jekyl, rising and taking his leave.

'Not enemies certainly, Captain Jekyl. I will own to you, I owe you my thanks for extricating me from that foolish affair at the Well: nothing could have put me to more inconvenience than the necessity of following to extremity a frivolous quarrel at the present moment.'

'You will come down among us, then?' said Jekyl.

'I certainly shall not wish to appear to hide myself,' answered Tyrrel; 'it is a circumstance might be turned against me: there is a party who will avail himself of every advantage. I have but one path, Captain Jekyl — that of truth and honour.'

Captain Jekyl bowed, and took his leave. So soon as he was gone, Tyrrel locked the door of the apartment, and drawing from his bosom a portrait, gazed on it with a mixture of sorrow and tenderness, until the tears dropped from his eye.

It was the picture of Clara Mowbray, such as he had known her in the days of their youthful love, and taken by himself, whose early turn for painting had already developed itself. The features of the blooming girl might be yet traced in the fine countenance of the more matured original. But what was now become of the glow which had shaded her cheek? what of the arch, yet subdued, pleasantry which lurked in the eye? what of the joyous content which composed every feature to

the expression of an Euphrosyne? Alas! these were long fled! Sorrow had laid his hand upon her — the purple light of youth was quenched — the glance of innocent gaiety was exchanged for looks now moody with ill-concealed care, now animated by a spirit of reckless and satirical observation.

'What a wreck! — what a wreck!' exclaimed Tyrrel; 'and all of one wretch's making. Can I put the last hand to the work, and be her murderer outright? I cannot — I cannot! I will be strong in the resolve I have formed: I will sacrifice all — rank, station, fortune, and fame. Revenge! — revenge itself, the last good left me — revenge itself I will sacrifice, to obtain for her such tranquillity as she may be yet capable to enjoy.'

In this resolution he sat down and wrote a letter to the commercial house with whom the documents of his birth, and other relative papers, were deposited, requesting that the packet containing them should be forwarded to him through the post-office.

Tyrrel was neither unambitious nor without those sentiments respecting personal consideration which are usually united with deep feeling and an ardent mind. It was with a trembling hand and a watery eye, but with a heart firmly resolved, that he sealed and despatched the letter — a step towards the resignation, in favour of his mortal enemy, of that rank and condition in life which was his own by right of inheritance, but had so long hung in doubt betwixt them.

CHAPTER XXX

Intrusion

By my troth, I will go with thee to the lane's-end ! I am a kind of
burr — I shall stick.

Measure for Measure.

IT was now far advanced in autumn. The dew lay thick on the long grass, where it was touched by the sun ; but where the sward lay in shadow, it was covered with hoar-frost, and crisped under Jekyl's foot, as he returned through the woods of St. Ronan's. The leaves of the ash-trees detached themselves from the branches, and, without an air of wind, fell spontaneously on the path. The mists still lay lazily upon the heights, and the huge old tower of St. Ronan's was entirely shrouded with vapour, except where a sunbeam, struggling with the mist, penetrated into its wreath so far as to show a projecting turret upon one of the angles of the old fortress, which, long a favourite haunt of the raven, was popularly called the Corbie's Tower. Beneath, the scene was open and lightsome, and the robin redbreast was chirping his best, to atone for the absence of all other choristers. The fine foliage of autumn was seen in many a glade, running up the sides of each little ravine, russet-hued and golden-specked, and tinged frequently with the red hues of the mountain-ash ; while here and there a huge old fir, the native growth of the soil, flung his broad shadow over the rest of the trees, and seemed to exult in the permanence of his dusky livery over the more showy but transitory brilliance by which he was surrounded.

Such is the scene which, so often described in prose and in poetry, yet seldom loses its effect upon the ear or upon the eye, and through which we wander with a strain of mind congenial to the decline of the year. There are few who do not feel the impression ; and even Jekyl, though bred to far different pursuits than those most favourable to such con-

templation, relaxed his pace to admire the uncommon beauty of the landscape.

Perhaps, also, he was in no hurry to rejoin the Earl of Etherington, towards whose service he felt himself more disinclined since his interview with Tyrrel. It was clear that that nobleman had not fully reposed in his friend the confidence promised : he had not made him aware of the existence of those important documents of proof on which the whole fate of his negotiation appeared now to hinge, and in so far had deceived him. Yet, when he pulled from his pocket and re-read Lord Etherington's explanatory letter, Jekyl could not help being more sensible than he had been on the first perusal how much the present possessor of that title felt alarmed at his brother's claims ; and he had some compassion for the natural feeling that must have rendered him shy of communicating at once the very worst view of his case, even to his most confidential friend. Upon the whole, he remembered that Lord Etherington had been his benefactor to an unusual extent ; that, in return, he had promised the young nobleman his active and devoted assistance in extricating him from the difficulties with which he seemed at present surrounded ; that, in quality of his confidant, he had become acquainted with the most secret transactions of his life ; and that it could only be some very strong cause indeed which could justify breaking off from him at this moment. Yet he could not help wishing either that his own obligations had been less, his friend's cause better, or, at least, the friend himself more worthy of assistance.

'A beautiful morning, sir, for such a foggy, d—d climate as this,' said a voice close by Jekyl's ear, which made him at once start out of his contemplation. He turned half round, and beside him stood our honest friend Touchwood, his throat muffled in his large Indian handkerchief, huge gouty shoes thrust upon his feet, his bob-wig well powdered, and the gold-headed cane in his hand, carried upright as a sergeant's halberd. One glance of contemptuous survey entitled Jekyl, according to his modish ideas, to rank the old gentleman as a regular-built quiz, and to treat him as the young gentlemen of his Majesty's Guards think themselves entitled to use every unfashionable variety of the human species. A slight inclination of a bow, and a very cold 'You have the advantage of me, sir,' dropped as it were unconsciously from his tongue, were meant to repress the old gentleman's advances, and moderate his ambition to be hail-fellow-well-met with his betters. But Mr.

Touchwood was callous to the intended rebuke; he had lived too much at large upon the world, and was far too confident of his own merits, to take a repulse easily, or to permit his modesty to interfere with any purpose which he had formed.

'Advantage of you, sir!' he replied. 'I have lived too long in the world not to keep all the advantages I have, and get all I can; and I reckon it one that I have overtaken you, and shall have the pleasure of your company to the Well.'

'I should but interrupt your worthier meditations, sir,' said the other; 'besides, I am a modest young man, and think myself fit for no better company than my own; moreover, I walk slow—very slow. Good-morning to you, Mr. A—A—I believe my treacherous memory has let slip your name, sir.'

'My name! Why, your memory must have been like Pat Murtough's greyhound, that let the hare go before he caught it. You never heard my name in your life. Touchwood is my name. What d'ye think of it, now you know it?'

'I am really no connoisseur in surnames,' answered Jekyl, 'and it is quite the same to me whether you call yourself Touchwood or Touchstone. Don't let me keep you from walking on, sir. You will find breakfast far advanced at the Well, sir, and your walk has probably given you an appetite.'

'Which will serve me to luncheon-time, I promise you,' said Touchwood. 'I always drink my coffee as soon as my feet are in my pabouches; it's the way all over the East. Never trust my breakfast to their scalding milk-and-water at the Well, I assure you; and for walking slow, I have had a touch of the gout.'

'Have you?' said Jekyl. 'I am sorry for that, because, if you have no mind to breakfast, I have; and so, Mr. Touchstone, good-morrow to you.'

But, although the young soldier went off at double quick time, his pertinacious attendant kept close by his side, displaying an activity which seemed inconsistent with his make and his years, and talking away the whole time, so as to show that his lungs were not in the least degree incommoded by the unusual rapidity of motion.

'Nay, young gentleman, if you are for a good smart walk, I am for you, and the gout may be d—d. You are a lucky fellow to have youth on your side; but yet, so far as between the Aultoun and the Well, I think I could walk you for your sum, barring running—all heel and toe—equal weight, and I would match Barclay himself for a mile.'

'Upon my word, you are a gay old gentleman!' said Jekyl, relaxing his pace; 'and if we must be fellow-travellers, though I can see no great occasion for it, I must even shorten sail for you.'

So saying, and as if another means of deliverance had occurred to him, he slackened his pace, took out a morocco case of cigars, and, lighting one with his *briquet*, said, while he walked on, and bestowed as much of its fragrance as he could upon the face of his intrusive companion, '*Vergeben Sie, mein Herr, ich bin erzogen in kaiserlicher[m] Dienst, muss rauchen ein kleine [klein] wenig.*'

'*Rauchen Sie immer fort,*' said Touchwood, producing a huge meerschaum, which, suspended by a chain from his neck, lurked in the bosom of his coat; '*habe auch mein Pfeifchen. Sehen sie den lieben Topf!*' and he began to return the smoke, if not the fire, of his companion, in full volumes, and with interest.

'The devil take the twaddle,' said Jekyl to himself, 'he is too old and too fat to be treated after the manner of Professor Jackson; and, on my life, I cannot tell what to make of him. He is a resider too: I must tip him the cold shoulder, or he will be pestering me eternally.'

Accordingly, he walked on, sucking his cigar, and apparently in as abstracted a mood as Mr. Cargill himself, without paying the least attention to Touchwood, who, nevertheless, continued talking, as if he had been addressing the most attentive listener in Scotland, whether it were the favourite nephew of a cross, old, rich bachelor or the aid-de-camp of some old rusty firelock of a general, who tells stories of the American war.

'And so, sir, I can put up with any companion at a pinch, for I have travelled in all sorts of ways, from a caravan down to a carrier's cart; but the best society is the best everywhere, and I am happy I have fallen in with a gentleman who suits me so well as you. That grave, steady attention of yours reminds me of Elfi Bey: you might talk to him in English, or anything he understood least of—you might have read Aristotle to Elfi—and not a muscle would he stir; give him his pipe, and he would sit on his cushion with a listening air as if he took in every word of what you said.'

Captain Jekyl threw away the remnant of his cigar with a little movement of pettishness, and began to whistle an opera air.

'There again, now! That is just so like the Marquis of Roccombe, another dear friend of mine, that whistles all the time you talk to him. He says he learned it in the Reign of

Terror, when a man was glad to whistle to show his throat was whole. And, talking of great folk, what do you think of this affair between Lord Etherington and his brother, or cousin, as some folk call him ?

Jekyl absolutely started at the question — a degree of emotion which, had it been witnessed by any of his fashionable friends, would for ever have ruined his pretensions to rank in the first order.

‘What affair ?’ he asked, so soon as he could command a certain degree of composure.

‘Why, you know the news surely ? Francis Tyrrel, whom all the company voted a coward the other day, turns out as brave a fellow as any of us ; for, instead of having run away to avoid having his own throat cut by Sir Bingo Binks, he was at the very moment engaged in a gallant attempt to murder his elder brother, or his more lawful brother, or his cousin, or some such near relation.’

‘I believe you are misinformed, sir,’ said Jekyl, drily ; and then resumed, as deftly as he could, his proper character of a pococurante.

‘I am told,’ continued Touchwood, ‘one Jekyl acted as a second to them both on the occasion — a proper fellow, sir — one of those fine gentlemen whom we pay for polishing the pavement in Bond Street, and looking at a thick shoe and a pair of worsted stockings as if the wearer were none of their paymasters. However, I believe the commander-in-chief is like to discard him when he hears what has happened.’

‘Sir !’ said Jekyl, fiercely ; then, recollecting the folly of being angry with an original of his companion’s description, he proceeded more coolly, ‘You are misinformed. Captain Jekyl knew nothing of any such matter as you refer to ; you talk of a person you know nothing of. Captain Jekyl is——’ Here he stopped a little, scandalised, perhaps, at the very idea of vindicating himself to such a personage from such a charge.

‘Ay — ay,’ said the traveller, filling up the chasm in his own way, ‘he is not worth our talking of, certainly ; but I believe he knew as much of the matter as either you or I do, for all that.’

‘Sir, this is either a very great mistake or wilful impertinence,’ answered the officer. ‘However absurd or intrusive you may be, I cannot allow you, either in ignorance or incivility, to use the name of Captain Jekyl with disrespect. I am Captain Jekyl, sir.’

‘Very like — very like,’ said Touchwood, with the most provoking indifference; ‘I guessed as much before.’

‘Then, sir, you may guess what is likely to follow, when a gentleman hears himself unwarrantably and unjustly slandered,’ replied Captain Jekyl, surprised and provoked that his annunciation of name and rank seemed to be treated so lightly. ‘I advise you, sir, not to proceed too far upon the immunities of your age and insignificance.’

‘I never presume farther than I have good reason to think necessary, Captain Jekyl,’ answered Touchwood, with great composure. ‘I am too old, as you say, for any such idiotical business as a duel, which no nation I know of practises but our silly fools of Europe; and then, as for your switch, which you are grasping with so much dignity, that is totally out of the question. Look you, young gentleman, four-fifths of my life have been spent among men who do not set a man’s life at the value of a button on his collar; every person learns, in such cases, to protect himself as he can, and whoever strikes me must stand to the consequences. I have always a brace of bull-dogs about me, which put age and youth on a level. So suppose me horsewhipped, and pray, at the same time, suppose yourself shot through the body. The same exertion of imagination will serve for both purposes.’

So saying, he exhibited a very handsome, highly-finished, and richly-mounted pair of pistols.

‘Catch me without my tools,’ said he, significantly buttoning his coat over the arms, which were concealed in a side-pocket, ingeniously contrived for that purpose. ‘I see you do not know what to make of me,’ he continued, in a familiar and confidential tone; ‘but, to tell you the truth, everybody that has meddled in this St. Ronan’s business is a little off the hooks — something of a *tête exaltée* — in plain words, a little crazy, or so — and I do not affect to be much wiser than other people.’

‘Sir,’ said Jekyl, ‘your manners and discourse are so unprecedented, that I must ask your meaning plainly and decidedly. Do you mean to insult me or no?’

‘No insult at all, young gentleman — all fair meaning, and above board; I only wished to let you know what the world may say, that is all.’

‘Sir,’ said Jekyl, hastily, ‘the world may tell what lies it pleases; but I was not present at the rencontre between Etherington and Mr. Tyrrel — I was some hundred miles off.’

'There now,' said Touchwood, 'there *was* a rencontre between them — the very thing I wanted to know.'

'Sir,' said Jekyl, aware too late that, in his haste to vindicate himself, he had committed his friend, 'I desire you will found nothing on an expression hastily used to vindicate myself from a false aspersion. I only meant to say, if there was an affair such as you talk of, I knew nothing of it.'

'Never mind — never mind, I shall make no bad use of what I have learned,' said Touchwood. 'Were you to eat your words with the best fish-sauce, and that is Burgess's, I have got all the information from them I wanted.'

'You are strangely pertinacious, sir,' replied Jekyl.

'O, a rock — a piece of flint for that. What I have learned, I have learned, but I will make no bad use of it. Harkye, captain, I have no malice against your friend — perhaps the contrary; but he is in a bad course, sir — has kept a false reckoning, for as deep as he thinks himself. And I tell you so, because I hold you — your finery out of the question — to be, as Hamlet says, indifferent honest; but, if you were not, why, necessity is necessity, and a man will take a Bedouin for his guide in the desert, whom he would not trust with an asper in the cultivated field; so I think of reposing some confidence in you — have not made up my mind yet, though.'

'On my word, sir, I am greatly flattered both by your intentions and your hesitation,' said Captain Jekyl. 'You were pleased to say just now that every one concerned with these matters was something particular.'

'Ay — ay, something crazy — a little mad, or so. That was what I said, and I can prove it.'

'I should be glad to hear the proof,' said Jekyl. 'I hope you do not except yourself?'

'Oh! by no means,' answered Touchwood: 'I am one of the maddest old boys ever slept out of straw or went loose. But you can put fishing questions in your turn, captain, I see that: you would fain know how much, or how little, I am in all these secrets. Well, that is as hereafter may be. In the meantime, here are my proofs. Old Scrogie Mowbray was mad, to like the sound of Mowbray better than that of Scrogie; young Scrogie was mad, not to like it as well. The old Earl of Etherington was not sane when he married a French wife in secret, and devilish mad indeed when he married an English one in public. Then for the good folk here, Mowbray of St. Ronan's is cracked, when he wishes to give his sister to he knows not precisely

whom ; she is a fool not to take him, because she *does* know who he is, and what has been between them ; and your friend is maddest of all, who seeks her under so heavy a penalty ; and you and I, captain, go mad gratis, for company's sake, when we mix ourselves with such a mess of folly and frenzy.'

'Really, sir, all that you have said is an absolute riddle to me,' replied the embarrassed Jekyl.

'Riddles may be read,' said Touchwood, nodding ; 'if you have any desire to read mine, pray take notice that, this being our first interview, I have exerted myself *faire les frais du [de la] conversation*, as Jack Frenchman says ; if you want another, you may come to Mrs. Dods's, at the Cleikum Inn, any day before Saturday, at four precisely, when you will find none of your half-starved, long-limbed bundles of bones, which you call poultry at the *table-d'hôte*, but a right Chittygong fowl!—I got Mrs. Dods the breed from old Ben Vandewash, the Dutch broker—stewed to a minute, with rice and mushrooms. If you can eat without a silver fork, and your appetite serves you, you shall be welcome—that's all. So, good morning to you, good master lieutenant, for a captain of the Guards is but a lieutenant after all.'

So saying, and ere Jekyl could make any answer, the old gentleman turned short off into a path which led to the healing fountain, branching away from that which conducted to the hotel.

Uncertain with whom he had been holding a conversation so strange, Jekyl remained looking after him, until his attention was roused by a little boy, who crept out from an adjoining thicket with a switch in his hand, which he had been just cutting—probably against regulations to the contrary effect made and provided, for he held himself ready to take cover in the copse again, in case any one were in sight who might be interested in chastising his delinquency. Captain Jekyl easily recognised in him one of that hopeful class of imps who pick up a precarious livelihood about places of public resort by going errands, brushing shoes, doing the groom's and coachman's work in the stables, driving donkeys, opening gates, and so forth, for about one-tenth part of their time, spending the rest in gambling, sleeping in the sun, and otherwise qualifying themselves to exercise the profession of thieves and pickpockets, either separately or in conjunction with those of waiters, grooms, and postilions. The little outcast had an indifferent pair of pantaloons, and about half a jacket, for, like Pentapolin with

the Naked Arm, he went on action with his right shoulder bare ; a third part of what had once been a hat covered his hair, bleached white with the sun ; and his face, as brown as a berry, was illuminated by a pair of eyes which, for spying out either peril or profit, might have rivalled those of the hawk. In a word, it was the original Puck of the Shaws dramaticals.

'Come hither, ye unhang'd whelp,' said Jekyl, 'and tell me if you know the old gentleman that passed down the walk just now — yonder he is, still in sight.'

'It is the Nabobab,' said the boy ; 'I could swear to his back among all the backs at the Waal, your honour.'

'What do you call a nabob, you varlet ?'

'A nabobab — a nabobab,' answered the scout. 'Od, I believe it is ane comes frae foreign parts, with mair siller than his pouches can haud, and spills it a' through the country ; they are as yellow as orangers, and maun hae a' thing their ain gate.'

'And what is this nabobab's name, as you call him ?' demanded Jekyl.

'His name is Touchwood,' said his informer ; 'ye may see him at the Waal every morning.'

'I have not seen him at the ordinary.'

'Na — na,' answered the boy ; 'he is a queer auld cull, he disna frequent wi' other folk, but lives up-bye at the Cleikum. He gave me half-a-crown yince, and forbade me to play it awa' at pitch and toss.'

'And you disobeyed him, of course ?'

'Na, I didna dis-obeyed him : I played it awa' at neevie-neevie-nick-nack.'

'Well, there is sixpence for thee ; lose it to the devil in any way thou think'st proper.'

So saying, he gave the little galopin his donative, and a slight rap on the pate at the same time, which sent him scouring from his presence. He himself hastened to Lord Etherington's apartments, and, as luck would have it, found the earl alone.

CHAPTER XXXI

Discussion

I will converse with iron-witted fools
And unrespective boys ; none are for me
That look into me with suspicious eyes.

Richard III.

‘**H**OW now, Jekyl!’ said Lord Etherington, eagerly ;
‘what news from the enemy ? Have you seen him ?’
‘I have,’ replied Jekyl.

‘And in what humour did you find him ? In none that was very favourable, I daresay, for you have a baffled and perplexed look, that confesses a losing-game. I have often warned you how your hand-dog look betrays you at brag. And then, when you would fain brush up your courage, and put a good face on a bad game, your bold looks always remind me of a standard hoisted only half-mast high, and betraying melancholy and dejection, instead of triumph and defiance.’

‘I am only holding the cards for your lordship at present,’ answered Jekyl ; ‘and I wish to Heaven there may be no one looking over the hand.’

‘How do you mean by that ?’

‘Why, I was beset, on returning through the wood, by an old bore, a nabob, as they call him, and Touchwood by name.’

‘I have seen such a quiz about,’ said Lord Etherington. ‘What of him ?’

‘Nothing,’ answered Jekyl, ‘except that he seemed to know much more of your affairs than you would wish or are aware of. He smoked the truth of the rencontre betwixt Tyrrel and you, and what is worse—I must needs confess the truth—he contrived to wring out of me a sort of confirmation of his suspicions.’

‘Slife ! wert thou mad ?’ said Lord Etherington, turning

pale. 'His is the very tongue to send the story through the whole country. Hal, you have undone me.'

'I hope not,' said Jekyl — 'I trust in Heaven I have not! His knowledge is quite general, only that there was some scuffle between you. Do not look so dismayed about it, or I will e'en go back and cut his throat, to secure his secrecy.'

'Cursed indiscretion!' answered the earl. 'How could you let him fix on you at all?'

'I cannot tell,' said Jekyl; 'he has powers of boring beyond ten of the dullest of all possible doctors — stuck like a limpet to a rock — a perfect double of the Old Man of the Sea, who I take to have been the greatest bore on record.'

'Could you not have turned him on his back like a turtle, and left him there?' said Lord Etherington.

'And had an ounce of lead in my body for my pains. No — no, we have already had footpad work enough: I promise you the old buck was armed, as if he meant to bring folks on the low toby.'

'Well — well. But Martigny, or Tyrrel, as you call him — what says he?'

'Why, Tyrrel, or Martigny, as your lordship calls him,' answered Jekyl, 'will by no means listen to your lordship's proposition. He will not consent that Miss Mowbray's happiness shall be placed in your lordship's keeping; nay, it did not meet his approbation a bit the more, when I hinted at the acknowledgment of the marriage, or the repetition of the ceremony, attended by an immediate separation, which I thought I might venture to propose.'

'And on what grounds does he refuse so reasonable an accommodation?' said Lord Etherington. 'Does he still seek to marry the girl himself?'

'I believe he thinks the circumstances of the case render that impossible,' replied his confidant.

'What! then he would play the dog in the manger — neither eat nor let eat? He shall find himself mistaken. She has used me like a dog, Jekyl, since I saw you; and, by Jove! I will have her, that I may break her pride, and cut him to the liver with the agony of seeing it.'

'Nay, but hold — hold!' said Jekyl; 'perhaps I have something to say on his part that may be a better compromise than all you could have by teasing him. He is willing to purchase what he calls Miss Mowbray's tranquillity at the expense of his resignation of his claims to your father's honours and estate;

and he surprised me very much, my lord, by showing me this list of documents, which, I am afraid, makes his success more than probable, if there really are such proofs in existence.' Lord Etherington took the paper, and seemed to read with much attention, while Jekyl proceeded — 'He has written to procure these evidences from the person with whom they are deposited.'

'We shall see what like they are when they arrive,' said Lord Etherington. 'They come by post, I suppose?'

'Yes; and may be immediately expected,' answered Jekyl.

'Well, he is my brother on one side of the house, at least,' said Lord Etherington; 'and I should not much like to have him lagged for forgery, which I suppose will be the end of his bolstering up an unsubstantial plea by fabricated documents. I should like to see these same papers he talks of.'

'But, my lord,' replied Jekyl, 'Tyrrel's allegation is, that you *have* seen them; and that copies, at least, were made out for you, and are in your possession; such is his averment.'

'He lies,' answered Lord Etherington, 'so far as he pretends I know of such papers. I consider the whole story as froth — foam — fudge, or whatever is most unsubstantial. It will prove such when the papers appear, if indeed they ever will appear. The whole is a bully from beginning to end; and I wonder at thee, Jekyl, for being so thirsty after syllabub that you can swallow such whipt cream as that stuff amounts to. No — no, I know my advantage, and shall use it so as to make all their hearts bleed. As for these papers, I recollect now that my agent talked of copies of some manuscripts having been sent him, but the originals were not then forthcoming; and I'll bet the long odds that they never are. Mere fabrications! if I thought otherwise, would I not tell you?'

'Certainly, I hope you would, my lord,' said Jekyl; 'for I see no chance of my being useful to you, unless I have the honour to enjoy your confidence.'

'You do — you do, my friend,' said Etherington, shaking him by the hand; 'and since I must consider your present negotiation as failed, I must devise some other mode of settling with this mad and troublesome fellow.'

'No violence, my lord,' said Jekyl, once more, and with much emphasis.

'None — none — none, by Heaven! Why, thou suspicious wretch, must I swear, to quell your scruples? On the contrary, it shall not be my fault if we are not on decent terms.'

'It would be infinitely to the advantage of both your

characters if you could bring that to pass,' answered Jekyl; 'and if you are serious in wishing it, I will endeavour to prepare Tyrrel. He comes to the Well or to the ordinary to-day, and it would be highly ridiculous to make a scene.'

'True — true; find him out, my dear Jekyl, and persuade him how foolish it will be to bring our family quarrels out before strangers, and for their amusement. They shall see the two bears can meet without biting. Go — go, I will follow you instantly; go, and remember you have my full and exclusive confidence. Go, half-bred, startling fool!' he continued, the instant Jekyl had left the room, 'with just spirits enough to ensure your own ruin, by hurrying you into what you are not up to. But he has character in the world, is brave, and one of those whose countenance gives a fair face to a doubtful business. He is my creature, too: I have bought and paid for him, and it would be idle extravagance not to make use of him. But as to confidence — no confidence, honest Hal, beyond that which cannot be avoided. If I wanted a confidant, here comes a better than thou by half. Solmes has no scruples: he will always give me money's worth of zeal and secrecy *for* money.'

His lordship's valet at this moment entered the apartment — a grave, civil-looking man, past the middle age, with a sallow complexion, a dark, thoughtful eye, slow and sparing of speech, and sedulously attentive to all the duties of his situation.

'Solmes,' said Lord Etherington, and then stopped short.

'My lord.' There was a pause; and when Lord Etherington had again said, 'Solmes!' and his valet had answered, 'Your lordship,' there was a second pause; until the earl, as if recollecting himself, 'Oh! I remember what I wished to say — it was about the course of post here. It is not very regular, I believe?'

'Regular enough, my lord, so far as concerns this place; the people in the Aultoun do not get their letters in course.'

'And why not, Solmes?' said his lordship.

'The old woman who keeps the little inn there, my lord, is on bad terms with the post-mistress; the one will not send for the letters, and the other will not despatch them to the village; so, betwixt them, they are sometimes lost or mislaid, or returned to the general post-office.'

'I wish that may not be the case of a packet which I expect in a few days; it should have been here already, or, perhaps, it may arrive in the beginning of the week; it is from that formal ass, Trueman the Quaker, who addresses me by my Christian

and family name, Francis Tyrrel. He is like enough to mistake the inn, too, and I should be sorry it fell into Monsieur Martigny's hands — I suppose you know he is in that neighbourhood? Look after its safety, Solmes — quietly, you understand; because people might put odd constructions, as if I were wanting a letter which was not my own.'

'I understand perfectly, my lord,' said Solmes, without exhibiting the slightest change in his sallow countenance, though entirely comprehending the nature of the service required.

'And here is a note will pay for postage,' said the earl, putting into his valet's hand a bank-bill of considerable value; 'and you may keep the balance for occasional expenses.'

This was also fully understood; and Solmes, too politic and cautious even to look intelligence or acknowledge gratitude, made only a bow of acquiescence, put the note into his pocket-book, and assured his lordship that his commands should be punctually attended to.

'There goes the agent for my money and for my purpose,' said Lord Etherington, exultingly; 'no extorting of confidence, no demanding of explanations, no tearing off the veil with which a delicate manœuvre is *gazé*; all excuses are received as *argent comptant*, provided only that the best excuse of all, the *argent comptant* itself, come to recommend them. Yet I will trust no one: I will out, like a skilful general, and reconnoitre in person.'

With this resolution, Lord Etherington put on his surtout and cap, and sallying from his apartments, took the way to the bookseller's shop, which also served as post-office and circulating library; and being in the very centre of the parade (for so is termed the broad terrace walk which leads from the inn to the Well), it formed a convenient lounging-place for newsmongers and idlers of every description.

The earl's appearance created, as usual, a sensation upon the public promenade; but whether it was the suggestion of his own alarmed conscience, or that there was some real cause for the remark, he could not help thinking his reception was of a more doubtful character than usual. His fine figure and easy manners produced their usual effect, and all whom he spoke to received his attention as an honour; but none offered, as usual, to unite themselves to him, or to induce him to join their party. He seemed to be looked on rather as an object of observation and attention than as making one of the company; and to escape from a distant gaze, which became rather em-

barrassing, he turned into the little emporium of news and literature.

He entered unobserved, just as Lady Penelope had finished reading some verses, and was commenting upon them with all the alacrity of a *femme savante* in possession of something which no one is to hear repeated oftener than once.

'Copy — no indeed !' these were the snatches which reached Lord Etherington's ear, from the group of which her ladyship formed the centre — 'honour bright — I must not betray poor Chatterly ; besides, his lordship is my friend, and a person of rank, you know, so one would not — You have not got the book, Mr. Pott — you have not got Statius ? You never have anything one longs to see.'

'Very sorry, my lady — quite out of copies at present ; I expect some in my next monthly parcel.'

'Good lack, Mr. Pott, that is your never-failing answer,' said Lady Penelope ; 'I believe if I were to ask you for the last new edition of the Alkoran, you would tell me it was coming down in your next monthly parcel.'

'Can't say, my lady, really,' answered Mr. Pott ; 'have not seen the work advertised yet ; but I have no doubt, if it is likely to take, there will be copies in my next monthly parcel.'

'Mr. Pott's supplies are always in the *paullo post futurum* tense,' said Mr. Chatterly, who was just entering the shop.

'Ah ! Mr. Chatterly, are you there ?' said Lady Penelope. 'I lay my death at your door. I cannot find this *Thebard*, where Polynices and his brother —'

'Hush, my lady ! — hush, for Heaven's sake !' said the poetical divine, and looked towards Lord Etherington. Lady Penelope took the hint, and was silent ; but she had said enough to call up the traveller Touchwood, who raised his head from the newspaper which he was studying, and, without addressing his discourse to any one in particular, ejaculated, as if in scorn of Lady Penelope's geography —

'Polynices ! — Polly Peachum ! There is no such place in the Thebais ; the Thebais is in Egypt ; the mummies come from the Thebais. I have been in the catacombs — caves very curious indeed ; we were lapidated by the natives — pebbled to some purpose, I give you my word. My janizary thrashed a whole village by way of retaliation.'

While he was thus proceeding, Lord Etherington, as if in a listless mood, was looking at the letters which stood ranged on

the chimney-piece, and carrying on a languid dialogue with Mrs. Pott, whose person and manners were not ill adapted to her situation, for she was good-looking and vastly fine and affected.

'Number of letters here which don't seem to find owners, Mrs. Pott?'

'Great number, indeed, my lord; it is a great vexation, for we are obliged to return them to the post-office, and the postage is charged against us if they are lost; and how can one keep sight of them all?'

'Any love-letters among them, Mrs. Pott?' said his lordship, lowering his tone.

'Oh, fie! my lord, how should I know?' answered Mrs. Pott, dropping her voice to the same cadence.

'Oh! every one can tell a love-letter — that has ever received one, that is; one knows them without opening: they are always folded hurriedly and sealed carefully, and the direction manifests a kind of tremulous agitation, that marks the state of the writer's nerves; that now,' pointing with his switch to a letter upon the chimney-piece — 'that *must* be a love-letter.'

'He, he, he!' giggled Mrs. Pott; 'I beg pardon for laughing, my lord, but — he, he, he! — that is a letter from one Bindloose, the banker body, to the old woman Luckie Dods, as they call her, at the change-house in the Aultoun.'

'Depend upon it, then, Mrs. Pott, that your neighbour, Mrs. Dods, has got a lover in Mr. Bindloose, unless the banker has been shaking hands with the palsy. Why do you not forward her letter? You are very cruel to keep it in durance here.'

'Me forward!' answered Mrs. Pott; 'the capernoity, old girning alewife may wait long enough or I forward it. She'll not loose the letters that come to her by the king's post, and she must go on troking wi' the old carrier, as if there was no post-house in the neighbourhood. But the solicitor will be about wi' her one of these days.'

'Oh! you are too cruel — you really should send the love-letter; consider, the older she is, the poor soul has the less time to lose.'

But this was a topic on which Mrs. Pott understood no jesting. She was well aware of our matron's inveteracy against her and her establishment, and she resented it as a placeman resents the efforts of a radical. She answered something sulkily, 'That they that loosed letters should have letters; and neither Luckie Dods nor any of her lodgers should ever see the scrape

of a pen from the St. Ronan's office that they did not call for and pay for.'

It is probable that this declaration contained the essence of the information which Lord Etherington had designed to extract by his momentary flirtation with Mrs Pott; for when, retreating as it were from this sore subject, she asked him, in a pretty mincing tone, to try his skill in pointing out another love-letter, he only answered carelessly, 'that in order to do that he must write her one'; and leaving his confidential station by her little throne, he lounged through the narrow shop, bowed slightly to Lady Penelope as he passed, and issued forth upon the parade, where he saw a spectacle which might well have appalled a man of less self-possession than himself.

Just as he left the shop, little Miss Digges entered almost breathless with the emotion of impatience and of curiosity.

'Oh la! my lady, what do you stay here for? Mr. Tyrrel has just entered the other end of the parade this moment, and Lord Etherington is walking that way; they must meet each other. O Lord! come—come away, and see them meet! I wonder if they'll speak. I hope they won't fight. Oh la! do come, my lady!'

'I must go with you, I find,' said Lady Penelope; 'it is the strangest thing, my love, that curiosity of yours about other folks' matters. I wonder what your mamma will say to it.'

'Oh! never mind mamma: nobody minds her—papa, nor nobody. Do come, dearest Lady Pen, or I will run away by myself. Mr. Chatterly, do make her come!'

'I must come, it seems,' said Lady Penelope, 'or I shall have a pretty account of you.'

But, notwithstanding this rebuke, and forgetting, at the same time, that people of quality ought never to seem in a hurry, Lady Penelope, with such of her satellites as she could hastily collect around her, tripped along the parade with unusual haste, in sympathy, doubtless, with Miss Digges's curiosity, as her ladyship declared she had none of her own.

Our friend, the traveller, had also caught up Miss Digges's information; and, breaking off abruptly an account of the Great Pyramid, which had been naturally introduced by the mention of the Thebais, and echoing the fair alarmist's words, 'hope they won't fight,' he rushed upon the parade, and bustled along as hard as his sturdy supporters could carry him. If the gravity of the traveller, and the delicacy of Lady Penelope, were surprised into unwonted haste from their eagerness to witness the

meeting of Tyrrel and Lord Etherington, it may be well supposed that the decorum of the rest of the company was a slender restraint on their curiosity, and that they hurried to be present at the expected scene with the alacrity of gentlemen of the fancy hastening to a set-to.

In truth, though the meeting afforded little sport to those who expected dire conclusions, it was, nevertheless, sufficiently interesting to those spectators who are accustomed to read the language of suppressed passion betraying itself at the moment when the parties are most desirous to conceal it.

Tyrrel had been followed by several loiterers so soon as he entered the public walk; and their number was now so much reinforced that he saw himself, with pain and displeasure, the centre of a sort of crowd who watched his motions. Sir Bingo and Captain MacTurk were the first to bustle through it, and to address him with as much politeness as they could command.

'Servant, sir,' mumbled Sir Bingo, extending the right hand of fellowship and reconciliation, ungloved — 'servant; sorry that anything should have happened between us — very sorry, on my word.'

'No more need be said, sir,' replied Tyrrel; 'the whole is forgotten.'

'Very handsome, indeed — quite the civil thing; hope to meet you often, sir.' And here the knight was silent.

Meanwhile the more verbose captain proceeded, 'Och, py Cot, and it was an awfu' mistake, and I could draw the penknife across my finger for having written the word. By my sowl, and I scratched it till I scratched a hole in the paper. Och! that I should live to do an uncivil thing by a gentleman that had got himself hit in an honourable affair! But you should have written, my dear; for how the devil could we guess that you were so well provided in quarrels that you had to settle two in one day!'

'I was hurt in an unexpected — an accidental manner, Captain MacTurk. I did not write, because there was something in my circumstances at the moment which required secrecy; but I was resolved, the instant I recovered, to put myself to rights in your good opinion.'

'Och! and you have done that,' said the captain, nodding sagaciously; 'for Captain Jekyl, who is a fine child, has put us all up to your honourable conduct. They are pretty boys, these guardsmen, though they may play a little fine sometimes, and think more of themselves than peradventure they need for to

of a pen from the St. Ronan's office that they did not call for and pay for.'

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it is needless to detail. I sent you a proposition — think of it well.'

'I will,' replied Lord Etherington, 'when I shall see it supported by those alleged proofs, which I do not believe ever had existence.'

'Your conscience holds another language from your tongue,' said Tyrrel; 'but I disclaim reproaches and decline altercation. I will let Captain Jekyl know when I have received the papers, which, you say, are essential to your forming an opinion on my proposal. In the meanwhile, do not think to deceive me. I am here for the very purpose of watching and defeating your machinations; and, while I live, be assured they shall never succeed. And now, sir — or my lord, for the titles are in your choice — fare you well.'

'Hold a little,' said Lord Etherington. 'Since we are condemned to shock each other's eyes, it is fit the good company should know what they are to think of us. You are a philosopher, and do not value the opinion of the public; a poor worldling like me is desirous to stand fair with it. Gentlemen,' he continued, raising his voice — 'Mr. Winterblossom, Captain Mac-Turk, Mr. — what is his name, Jekyl? — ay, Micklehen — you have, I believe, all some notion that this gentleman, my near relation, and I have some undecided claims on each other, which prevent our living upon good terms. We do not mean, however, to disturb you with our family quarrels; and, for my own part, while this gentleman, Mr. Tyrrel, or whatever he may please to call himself, remains a member of this company, my behaviour to him will be the same as to any stranger who may have that advantage. Good morrow to you, sir. Good morning, gentlemen; we all meet at dinner, as usual. Come, Jekyl.'

So saying, he took Jekyl by the arm, and, gently extricating himself from the sort of crowd, walked off, leaving most of the company prepossessed in his favour, by the ease and apparent reasonableness of his demeanour. Sounds of depreciation, forming themselves indistinctly into something like the words 'My eye, and Betty Martin,' did issue from the neckcloth of Sir Bingo, but they were not much attended to; for it had not escaped the observation of the quick-sighted gentry at the Well that the baronet's feelings towards the noble earl were in the inverse ratio of those displayed by Lady Binks, and that, though ashamed to testify, or perhaps incapable of feeling, any anxious degree of jealousy, his temper had been for some time

do, in comparison with us of the line. But he let us know all about it ; and, though he said not a word of a certain fine lord, with his footpad and his hurt, and what not, yet we all knew how to lay that and that together. And if the law would not right you, and there were bad words between you, why should not two gentlemen right themselves ? And as to your being kinsmen, why should not kinsmen behave to each other like men of honour ? Only, some say you are father's sons, and that *is* something too near. I had once thoughts of calling out my uncle Dougal myself, for there is no saying where the line should be drawn ; but I thought, on the whole, there should be no fighting, as there is no marriage, within the forbidden degrees. As for first cousins — wheugh ! — that's all fair ; fire away, Flanigan ! But here is my lord, just upon us, like a stag of the first head, and the whole herd behind him.'

Tyrrel stepped forward a little before his officious companions, his complexion rapidly changing into various shades, like that of one who forces himself to approach and touch some animal or reptile for which he entertains that deep disgust and abhorrence which was anciently ascribed to constitutional antipathy. This appearance of constraint put upon himself, with the changes which it produced on his face, was calculated to prejudice him somewhat in the opinion of the spectators, when compared with the steady, stately, yet, at the same time, easy demeanour of the Earl of Etherington, who was equal to any man in England in the difficult art of putting a good countenance on a bad cause. He met Tyrrel with an air as unembarrassed as it was cold ; and, while he paid the courtesy of a formal and distant salutation, he said aloud, 'I presume, Mr. Tyrrel de Martigny, that, since you have not thought fit to avoid this awkward meeting, you are disposed to remember our family connexion so far as to avoid making sport for the good company ?'

'You have nothing to apprehend from my passion, Mr. Bulmer,' replied Tyrrel, 'if you can assure yourself against the consequences of your own.'

'I am glad of that,' said the earl, with the same composure, but sinking his voice so as only to be heard by Tyrrel ; 'and as we may not again in a hurry hold any communication together, I take the freedom to remind you that I sent you a proposal of accommodation by my friend, Mr. Jekyl.'

'It was inadmissible,' said Tyrrel — 'altogether inadmissible, both from reasons which you may guess and others which

took care to have the spending of it first. What would *you* give for such an opportunity of piecing your fortunes by marriage? Confess the truth.'

'I might be tempted, perhaps,' said Jekyl, 'in my present circumstances; but if they were what they have been, I should despise an estate that was to be held by petticoat tenure, especially when the lady of the manor was a sickly, fantastic girl that hated me, as this Miss Mowbray has the bad taste to hate you.'

'Umph — sickly! No, no, she is not sickly — she is as healthy as any one in constitution; and, on my word, I think her paleness only renders her more interesting. The last time I saw her, I thought she might have rivalled one of Canova's finest statues.'

'Yes; but she is indifferent to you — you do not love her,' said Jekyl.

'She is anything but indifferent to me,' said the earl: 'she becomes daily more interesting, for her dislike piques me; and besides, she has the insolence openly to defy and contemn me before her brother, and in the eyes of all the world. I have a kind of loving hatred — a sort of hating love for her; in short, thinking upon her is like trying to read a riddle, and makes one make quite as many blunders and talk just as much nonsense. If ever I have the opportunity, I will make her pay for all her airs.'

'What airs?' said Jekyl.

'Nay, the devil may describe them, for I cannot; but, for example, since her brother has insisted on her receiving me, or I should rather say on her appearing when I visit Shaws Castle, one would think her invention has toiled in discovering different ways of showing want of respect to me, and dislike to my presence. Instead of dressing herself as a lady should, especially on such occasions, she chooses some fantastic, or old-fashioned, or negligent bedizening, which makes her at least look odd, if it cannot make her ridiculous — such triple tiaras of various-coloured gauze on her head; such pieces of old tapestry, I think, instead of shawls and pelisses; such thick-soled shoes; such tan-leather gloves — mercy upon us, Hal, the very sight of her equipment would drive mad a whole conclave of milliners! Then her postures are so strange: she does so stoop and lollop, as the women call it, so cross her legs and square her arms; were the goddess of grace to look down on her, it would put her to flight for ever!'

'And you are willing to make this awkward, ill-dressed, unmannered dowdy your countess, Etherington — you, for whose critical eye half the town dress themselves?' said Jekyl.

'It is all a trick, Hal — all an assumed character to get rid of me, to disgust me, to baffle me; but I am not to be had so easily. The brother is driven to despair: he bites his nails, winks, coughs, makes signs, which she always takes up at cross-purpose. I hope he beats her after I go away; there would be a touch of consolation, were one but certain of that.'

'A very charitable hope, truly, and your present feelings might lead the lady to judge what she may expect after wedlock. But,' added Jekyl, 'cannot you, so skilful in fathoming every mood of the female mind, divine some mode of engaging her in conversation?'

'Conversation!' replied the earl. 'Why, ever since the shock of my first appearance was surmounted, she has contrived to vote me a nonentity; and that she may annihilate me completely, she has chosen, of all occupations, that of working a stocking! From what cursed old antediluvian, who lived before the invention of spinning-jennies, she learned this craft, Heaven only knows; but there she sits, with her work pinned to her knee — not the pretty taper silken fabric with which Jeannette of Amiens coquetted, while Tristram Shandy was observing her progress, but a huge worsted bag, designed for some flat-footed old pauper, with heels like an elephant. And there she squats, counting all the stitches as she works, and refusing to speak, or listen, or look up, under pretence that it disturbs her calculation!'

'An elegant occupation, truly, and I wonder it does not work a cure upon her noble admirer,' said Jekyl.

'Confound her! no; she shall not trick me. And then amid this affectation of vulgar stolidity there break out such sparkles of exultation, when she thinks she has succeeded in baffling her brother and in plaguing me, that, by my faith, Hal, I could not tell, were it at my option, whether to kiss or to cuff her.'

'You are determined to go on with this strange affair, then?' said Jekyl.

'On — on — on, my boy! Clara and Nettlewood for ever!' answered the earl. 'Besides, this brother of hers provokes me too: he does not do for me half what he might — what he ought to do. He stands on points of honour, forsooth, this broken-down horse-jockey, who swallowed my two thousand pounds as a pointer would a pat of butter. I can see he wishes to play

fast and loose—has some suspicions, like you, Hal, upon the strength of my right to my father's titles and estate; as if, with the tithe of the Nettlewood property alone, I would not be too good a match for one of his beggarly family. He must scheme, forsooth, this half-baked Scotch cake! He must hold off and on, and be cautious, and wait the result, and try conclusions with me, this lump of oatmeal dough! I am much tempted to make an example of him in the course of my proceedings.'

'Why, this is vengeance horrible and dire,' said Jekyl; 'yet I give up the brother to you: he is a conceited coxcomb, and deserves a lesson. But I would fain intercede for the sister.'

'We shall see,' replied the earl; and then suddenly, 'I tell you what it is, Hal, her caprices are so diverting, that I sometimes think, out of mere contradiction, I almost love her; at least, if she would but clear old scores, and forget one unlucky prank of mine, it should be her own fault if I did not make her a happy woman.'

CHAPTER XXXII

A Death-bed

It comes — it wrings me in my parting hour,
The long-hid crime — the well-disguised guilt.
Bring me some holy priest to lay the spectre !

Old Play.

THE general expectation of the company had been disappointed by the pacific termination of the meeting betwixt the Earl of Etherington and Tyrrel, the anticipation of which had created so deep a sensation. It had been expected that some appalling scene would have taken place; instead of which, each party seemed to acquiesce in a sullen neutrality, and leave the war to be carried on by their lawyers. It was generally understood that the cause was removed out of the courts of Bellona into that of Themis; and although the litigants continued to inhabit the same neighbourhood, and once or twice met at the public walks or public table, they took no notice of each other, farther than by exchanging on such occasions a grave and distant bow.

In the course of two or three days, people ceased to take interest in a feud so coldly conducted; and if they thought of it at all, it was but to wonder that both the parties should persevere in residing near the Spa, and in chilling, with their unsocial behaviour, a party met together for the purposes of health and amusement.

But the brothers, as the reader is aware, however painful their occasional meetings might be, had the strongest reasons to remain in each other's neighbourhood — Lord Etherington to conduct his design upon Miss Mowbray, Tyrrel to disconcert his plan, if possible, and both to await the answer which should be returned by the house in London, who were depositaries of the papers left by the late earl.

Jekyl, anxious to assist his friend as much as possible, made

in the meantime a visit to old Touchwood at the Aultoun, expecting to find him as communicative as he had formerly been on the subject of the quarrel betwixt the brothers, and trusting to discover, by dint of address, whence he had derived his information concerning the affairs of the noble house of Etherington. But the confidence which he had been induced to expect on the part of the old traveller was not reposed. Ferdinand Mendez Pinto, as the earl called him, had changed his mind, or was not in the vein of communication. The only proof of his confidence worth mentioning was his imparting to the young officer a valuable receipt for concocting curry-powder.

Jekyl was therefore reduced to believe that Touchwood, who appeared all his life to have been a great intermeddler in other people's matters, had puzzled out the information which he appeared to possess of Lord Etherington's affairs through some of those obscure sources whence very important secrets do frequently, to the astonishment and confusion of those whom they concern, escape to the public. He thought this the more likely, as Touchwood was by no means critically nice in his society, but was observed to converse as readily with a gentleman's gentleman as with the gentleman to whom he belonged, and with a lady's attendant as with the lady herself. He that will stoop to this sort of society, who is fond of tattle, being at the same time disposed to pay some consideration for gratification of his curiosity, and not over-scrupulous respecting its accuracy, may always command a great quantity of private anecdote. Captain Jekyl naturally enough concluded that this busy old man became in some degree master of other people's affairs by such correspondences as these; and he could himself bear witness to his success in cross-examination, as he had been surprised into an avowal of the rencontre between the brothers by an insidious observation of the said Touchwood. He reported, therefore, to the earl, after this interview, that, 'On the whole, he thought he had no reason to fear much on the subject of the traveller, who, though he had become acquainted, by some means or other, with some leading facts of his remarkable history, only possessed them in a broken, confused, and desultory manner, insomuch that he seemed to doubt whether the parties in the expected lawsuit were brothers or cousins, and appeared totally ignorant of the facts on which it was to be founded.'

It was the next day after this *éclaircissement* on the subject

of Touchwood that Lord Etherington dropped as usual into the bookseller's shop, got his papers, and skimming his eye over the shelf on which lay, till called for, the postponed letters destined for the Aultoun, saw with a beating heart the smart post-mistress toss amongst them, with an air of sovereign contempt, a pretty large packet, addressed to 'Francis Tyrrel, Esq.,' etc. He withdrew his eyes, as if conscious that even to have looked on this important parcel might engender some suspicion of his purpose, or intimate the deep interest which he took in the contents of the missive which was so slightly treated by his friend Mrs. Pott. At this moment the door of the shop opened, and Lady Penelope Penfeather entered, with her eternal *pendante*, the little Miss Digges.

'Have you seen Mr. Mowbray? Has Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's been down this morning? Do you know anything of Mr. Mowbray, Mrs. Pott?' were questions which the lettered lady eagerly huddled on the back of each other, scarcely giving time to the lady of letters to return a decided negative to all and each of them.

'Mr. Mowbray was not about — was not coming there this morning; his servant had just called for letters and papers, and announced as much.'

'Good Heaven! how unfortunate!' said Lady Penelope, with a deep sigh, and sinking down on one of the little sofas in an attitude of shocking desolation, which called the instant attention of Mr. Pott and his good woman, the first uncorking a small phial of salts, for he was a pharmacopolist as well as vender of literature and transmitter of letters, and the other hastening for a glass of water. A strong temptation thrilled from Lord Etherington's eyes to his finger-ends. Two steps might have brought him within arm's-length of the unwatched packet, on the contents of which, in all probability, rested the hope and claims of his rival in honour and fortune; and, in the general confusion, was it impossible to possess himself of it unobserved? But no — no — no, the attempt was too dreadfully dangerous to be risked; and, passing from one extreme to another, he felt as if he was incurring suspicion by suffering Lady Penelope to play off her airs of affected distress and anxiety without seeming to take that interest in them which her rank at least might be supposed to demand. Stung with this apprehension, he hastened to express himself so anxiously on the subject, and to demonstrate so busily his wish to assist her ladyship, that he presently stood committed a great deal farther than he had intended. Lady

Penelope was infinitely obliged to his lordship — indeed, it was her character in general not to permit herself to be overcome by circumstances; but something had happened so strange, so embarrassing, so melancholy, that she owned it had quite overcome her; notwithstanding, she had at all times piqued herself on supporting her own distresses better than she was able to suppress her emotions in viewing those of others.

‘Could he be of any use?’ Lord Etherington asked. ‘She had inquired after Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan’s — his servant was at her ladyship’s service, if she chose to send to command his attendance.’

‘Oh! no — no!’ said Lady Penelope; ‘I daresay, my dear lord, you will answer the purpose a great deal better than Mr. Mowbray — that is, provided you are a justice of peace.’

‘A justice of peace!’ said Lord Etherington, much surprised; ‘I am in the commission unquestionably, but not for any Scotch county.’

‘O, that does not signify,’ said Lady Penelope; ‘and if you will trust yourself with me a little way, I will explain to you how you can do one of the most charitable, and kind, and generous things in the world.’

Lord Etherington’s delight in the exercise of charity, kindness, and generosity was not so exuberant as to prevent his devising some means for evading Lady Penelope’s request, when, looking through the sash-door, he had a distant glance of his servant Solmes approaching the post-office.

I have heard of a sheepstealer who had rendered his dog so skilful an accomplice in his nefarious traffic, that he used to send him out to commit acts of felony by himself, and had even contrived to impress on the poor cur the caution that he should not, on such occasions, seem even to recognise his master, if they met accidentally.¹ Apparently, Lord Etherington conducted himself upon a similar principle; for he had no sooner a glimpse of his agent than he seemed to feel the necessity of leaving the stage free for his machinations.

‘My servant,’ he said, with as much indifference as he could assume, ‘will call for my letters — I must attend Lady Penelope’; and, instantly proffering his services as justice of the peace, or in whatever other quality she chose to employ them, he hastily presented his arm, and scarce gave her ladyship time to recover from her state of languor to the necessary degree of activity ere he hurried her from the shop; and,

¹ See Dogs as Sheepstealers. Note 10.

with her thin hatchet-face chattering close to his ear, her yellow and scarlet feathers crossing his nose, her lean right honourable arm hooking his elbow, he braved the suppressed titters and sneers of all the younger women whom he met as they traversed the parade. One glance of intelligence, though shot at a distance, passed betwixt his lordship and Solmes, as the former left the public walk under the guidance of Lady Penelope, his limbs indeed obeying her pleasure, and his ears dinning with her attempts to explain the business in question, but his mind totally indifferent where he was going, or ignorant on what purpose, and exclusively occupied with the packet in Mrs. Pott's heap of postponed letters, and its probable fate.

At length an effort of recollection made Lord Etherington sensible that his abstraction must seem strange, and, as his conscience told him, even suspicious, in the eyes of his companion; putting therefore the necessary degree of constraint upon himself, he expressed, for the first time, curiosity to know where their walk was to terminate. It chanced that this was precisely the question which he needed not to have asked, if he had paid but the slightest attention to the very voluble communications of her ladyship, which had all turned upon this subject.

'Now, my dear lord,' she said, 'I must believe you lords of the creation think us poor simple women the vainest fools alive. I have told you how much pain it costs me to speak about my little charities, and yet you come to make me tell you the whole story over again. But I hope, after all, your lordship is not surprised at what I have thought it my duty to do in this sad affair—perhaps I have listened too much to the dictates of my own heart, which are apt to be so deceitful.'

On the watch to get at something explanatory, yet afraid, by demanding it directly, to show that the previous tide of narrative and pathos had been lost on an inattentive ear, Lord Etherington could only say, that Lady Penelope could not err in acting according to the dictates of her own judgment.

Still the compliment had not sauce enough for the lady's sated palate; so, like a true glutton of praise, she began to help herself with the soup-ladle.

'Ah! judgment! how is it you men know us so little, that you think we can pause to weigh sentiment in the balance of judgment? That is expecting rather too much from us poor victims of our feelings; so that you must really hold me

excused if I forgot the errors of this guilty and unhappy creature when I looked upon her wretchedness. Not that I would have my little friend, Miss Digges, or your lordship, suppose that I am capable of palliating the fault, while I pity the poor, miserable sinner. Oh no, Walpole's verses express beautifully what one ought to feel on such occasions —

For never was the gentle breast
Insensible to human woes ;
Feeling, though firm, it melts distress'd
For weaknesses it never knows.'

'Most accursed of all *précieuses*,' thought his lordship, 'when wilt thou, amidst all thy chatter, utter one word sounding like sense or information ?'

But Lady Penelope went on — 'If you knew, my lord, how I lament my limited means on those occasions ! but I have gathered something among the good people at the Well. I asked that selfish wretch, Winterblossom, to walk down with me to view her distress, and the heartless beast told me he was afraid of infection — infection from a puer — puerperal fever ! I should not perhaps pronounce the word, but science is of no sex. However, I have always used thieves' vinegar essence, and never have gone farther than the threshold.'

Whatever were Etherington's faults, he did not want charity, so far as it consists in giving alms.

'I am sorry,' he said, taking out his purse, 'your ladyship should not have applied to me.'

'Pardon me, my lord, we only beg from our friends ; and your lordship is so constantly engaged with Lady Binks, that we have rarely the pleasure of seeing you in what I call *my* little circle.'

Lord Etherington, without further answer, tendered a couple of guineas, and observed, that the poor woman should have medical attendance.

'Why, so I say,' answered Lady Penelope ; 'and I asked the brute Quackleben, who, I am sure, owes me some gratitude, to go and see her ; but the sordid monster answered, "Who was to pay him ?" He grows every day more intolerable, now that he seems sure of marrying that fat blowzy widow. He could not, I am sure, expect that I, out of my pittance — And besides, my lord, is there not a law that the parish, or the county, or the something or other, shall pay for physicking the poor ?'

'We will find means to secure the doctor's attendance,' said

Lord Etherington; 'and I believe my best way will be to walk back to the Well and send him to wait on the patient. I am afraid I can be of little use to a poor woman in a childbed fever.'

'Puerperal, my lord — puerperal,' said Lady Penelope, in a tone of correction.

'In a puerperal fever, then,' said Lord Etherington; 'why, what can I do to help her?'

'Oh! my lord, you have forgotten that this Anne Heggie, that I told you of, came here with one child in her arms and another — in short, about to become a mother again — and settled herself in this miserable hut I told you of; and some people think the minister should have sent her to her own parish, but he is a strange, soft-headed, sleepy sort of man, not over active in his parochial duties. However, there she settled, and there was something about her quite beyond the style of a common pauper, my lord — not at all the disgusting sort of person that you give a sixpence to while you look another way, but some one that seemed to have seen better days — one that, as Shakspeare says, could a tale unfold; though, indeed, I have never thoroughly learned her history, only, that to-day, as I called to know how she was, and sent my maid into her hut with some trifle not worth mentioning, I find there is something hangs about her mind concerning the Mowbray family here of St. Ronan's; and my woman says the poor creature is dying, and is raving either for Mr. Mowbray or for some magistrate to receive a declaration; and so I have given you the trouble to come with me, that we may get out of the poor creature, if possible, whatever she has got to say. I hope it is not murder — I hope not, though young St. Ronan's has been a strange, wild, daring, thoughtless creature — *sgherro insigne*, as the Italian says. But here is the hut, my lord; pray, walk in.'

The mention of the St. Ronan's family, and of a secret relating to them, banished the thoughts which Lord Etherington began to entertain of leaving Lady Penelope to execute her works of devoted charity without his assistance. It was now with an interest equal to her own that he stood before a most miserable hut, where the unfortunate female, her distresses not greatly relieved by Lady Penelope's ostentatious bounty, had resided both previous to her confinement and since that event had taken place with an old woman, one of the parish poor, whose miserable dole the minister had augmented, that she might have some means of assisting the stranger.

Lady Penelope lifted the latch and entered, after a momentary hesitation, which proceeded from a struggle betwixt her fear of infection and her eager curiosity to know something, she could not guess what, that might affect the Mowbrays in their honour or fortunes. The latter soon prevailed, and she entered, followed by Lord Etherington. The lady, like other comforters of the cabins of the poor, proceeded to rebuke the grumbling old woman for want of order and cleanliness, censured the food which was provided for the patient, and inquired particularly after the wine which she had left to make caudle with.

The crone was not so dazzled with Lady Penelope's dignity or bounty as to endure her reprimand with patience. 'They that had their bread to won wi' ae arm,' she said, for the other hung powerless by her side, 'had mair to do than to soop houses; if her leddyship wad let her ain idle quean of a lass take the besom, she might make the house as clean as she liked; and madam wad be a' the better of the exercise, and wad hae done, at least, ae turn of wark at the week's end.'

'Do you hear the old hag, my lord?' said Lady Penelope. 'Well, the poor are horrid ungrateful wretches. And the wine, dame — the wine?'

'The wine! there was hardly half a mutchkin, and puir, thin, fusionless skink it was. The wine was drank out, ye may swear: we didna fling it ower our shouter; if ever we were to get good o't, it was by taking it naked, and no wi' your sugar and your slaisters. I wish, for ane, I had ne'er kenn'd the sour smack o't. If the bedral hadna gien me a drap of usquebaugh, I might e'en hae died of your leddyship's liquor, for ——'

Lord Etherington here interrupted the grumbling crone, thrusting some silver into her grasp, and at the same time begging her to be silent. The hag weighed the crown-piece in her hand, and crawled to her chimney-corner, muttering as she went, 'This is something like — this is something like; no like rinning into the house and out of the house, and gieing orders, like mistress and mair, and than a puir shilling again Saturday at e'en.'

So saying, she sat down to her wheel, and seized, while she spun, her jet-black cutty pipe, from which she soon sent such clouds of vile mundungus vapour as must have cleared the premises of Lady Penelope, had she not been strong in purpose to share the expected confession of the invalid. As for Miss Digges, she coughed, sneezed, retched, and finally ran out of

the cottage, declaring 'She could not live in such a smoke, if it were to hear twenty sick women's last speeches; and that, besides, she was sure to know all about it from Lady Penelope, if it was ever so little worth telling over again.'

Lord Etherington was now standing beside the miserable flock-bed, in which lay the poor patient, distracted, in what seemed to be her dying moments, with the peevish clamour of the elder infant, to which she could only reply by low moans, turning her looks as well as she could from its ceaseless whine to the other side of her wretched couch, where lay the unlucky creature to which she had last given birth; its shivering limbs imperfectly covered with a blanket, its little features already swollen and bloated, and its eyes scarce open, apparently insensible to the evils of a state from which it seemed about to be speedily released.

'You are very ill, poor woman,' said Lord Etherington; 'I am told you desire a magistrate.'

'It was Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's whom I desired to see — John Mowbray of St. Ronan's; the lady promised to bring him here.'

'I am not Mowbray of St. Ronan's,' said Lord Etherington; 'but I am a justice of peace, and a member of the legislature; I am, moreover, Mr. Mowbray's particular friend, if I can be of use to you in any of these capacities.'

The poor woman remained long silent, and when she spoke it was doubtfully. 'Is my Lady Penelope Penfeather there?' she said, straining her darkened eyes.

'Her ladyship is present, and within hearing,' said Lord Etherington.

'My case is the worse,' answered the dying woman, for so she seemed, 'if I must communicate such a secret as mine to a man of whom I know nothing, and a woman of whom I only know that she wants discretion.'

'I — I want discretion!' said Lady Penelope; but at a signal from Lord Etherington she seemed to restrain herself; nor did the sick woman, whose powers of observation were greatly impaired, seem to be aware of the interruption. She spoke, notwithstanding her situation, with an intelligible and even emphatic voice; her manner in a great measure betraying the influence of the fever, and her tone and language seeming much superior to her most miserable condition.

'I am not the abject creature which I seem,' she said; 'at least, I was not born to be so. I wish I *were* that utter abject!

I wish I were a wretched pauper of the lowest class — a starving vagabond — a wifeless mother ! ignorance and insensibility would make me bear my lot like the outcast animal that dies patiently on the side of the common, where it has been half-starved during its life. But I — but I — born and bred to better things, have not lost the memory of them, and they make my present condition — my shame — my poverty — my infamy — the sight of my dying babes — the sense that my own death is coming fast on — they make these things a foretaste of hell !’

Lady Penelope’s self-conceit and affectation were broken down by this fearful exordium. She sobbed, shuddered, and, for once perhaps in her life, felt the real, not the assumed, necessity of putting her handkerchief to her eyes. Lord Etherington also was moved.

‘Good woman,’ he said, ‘as far as relieving your personal wants can mitigate your distress, I will see that that is fully performed, and that your poor children are attended to.’

‘May God bless you !’ said the poor woman, with a glance at the wretched forms beside her ; ‘and may you,’ she added, after a momentary pause, ‘deserve the blessing of God, for it is bestowed in vain on those who are unworthy of it !’

Lord Etherington felt, perhaps, a twinge of conscience ; for he said, something hastily, ‘Pray go on, good woman, if you really have anything to communicate to me as a magistrate ; it is time your condition was somewhat mended, and I will cause you to be cared for directly.’

‘Stop yet a moment,’ she said ; ‘let me unload my conscience before I go hence, for no earthly relief will long avail to prolong my time here. I was well born, the more my present shame ! well educated, the greater my present guilt ! I was always, indeed, poor, but I felt not of the ills of poverty. I only thought of it when my vanity demanded idle and expensive gratifications, for real wants I knew none. I was companion of a young lady of higher rank than my own, my relative, however, and one of such exquisite kindness of disposition that she treated me as a sister, and would have shared with me all that she had on earth — I scarce think I can go farther with my story ; something rises to my throat when I recollect how I rewarded her sisterly love. I was elder than Clara — I should have directed her reading and confirmed her understanding ; but my own bent led me to peruse only works which, though they burlesque nature, are seductive to the imagination. We read these follies together, until we had fashioned out for ourselves

a little world of romance, and prepared ourselves for a maze of adventures. Clara's imaginations were as pure as those of angels; mine were — but it is unnecessary to tell them. The fiend, always watchful, presented a tempter at the moment when it was most dangerous.'

She paused here, as if she found difficulty in expressing herself; and Lord Etherington, turning, with great appearance of interest, to Lady Penelope, began to inquire, 'Whether it were quite agreeable to her ladyship to remain any longer an ear-witness of this unfortunate's confession? It seems to be verging on some things — things that it might be unpleasant for your ladyship to hear.'

'I was just forming the same opinion, my lord; and, to say truth, was about to propose to your lordship to withdraw, and leave me alone with the poor woman. My sex will make her necessary communications more frank in your lordship's absence.'

'True, madam; but then I am called here in my capacity of a magistrate.'

'Hush!' said Lady Penelope; 'she speaks.'

'They say every woman that yields makes herself a slave to her seducer; but I sold my liberty not to a man but a demon. He made me serve him in his vile schemes against my friend and patroness; and oh! he found in me an agent too willing, from mere envy, to destroy the virtue which I had lost myself. Do not listen to me any more. Go, and leave me to my fate. I am the most detestable wretch that ever lived — detestable to myself worst of all, because even in my penitence there is a secret whisper that tells me that, were I as I have been, I would again act over all the wickedness I have done, and much worse. Oh! for Heaven's assistance to crush the wicked thought!'

She closed her eyes, folded her emaciated hands, and held them upwards in the attitude of one who prays internally; presently the hands separated and fell gently down on the miserable couch; but her eyes did not open, nor was there the slightest sign of motion in the features. Lady Penelope shrieked faintly, hid her eyes, and hurried back from the bed, while Lord Etherington, his looks darkening with a complication of feelings, remained gazing on the poor woman, as if eager to discern whether the spark of life was totally extinct. Her grim old assistant hurried to the bedside with some spirits in a broken glass.

'Have ye no had pennyworths for your charity?' she said, in spiteful scorn. 'Ye buy the very life o' us wi' your shillings and sixpences, your groats and your boddles: ye hae garr'd the puir wretch speak till she swarfs, and now ye stand as if ye never saw a woman in a dwam before? Let me till her wi' the dram: mony words, mickle drought, ye ken. Stand out o' my gate, my leddy, if sae be that ye are a leddy; there is little use of the like of you when there is death in the pot.'

Lady Penelope, half affronted, but still more frightened by the manners of the old hag, now gladly embraced Lord Etherington's renewed offer to escort her from the hut. He left it not, however, without bestowing an additional gratuity on the old woman, who received it with a whining benediction.

'The Almighty guide your course through the troubles of this wicked warld; and the muckle deevil blaw wind in your sails,' she added, in her natural tone, as the guests vanished from her miserable threshold. 'A wheen cork-headed, barmy-brained gowks! that wunna let puir folk sae muckle as die in quiet, wi' their sossings and their soopings.'¹

'This poor creature's declaration,' said Lord Etherington to Lady Penelope, 'seems to refer to matters which the law has nothing to do with, and which, perhaps, as they seem to implicate the peace of a family of respectability, and the character of a young lady, we ought to inquire no farther after.'

'I differ from your lordship,' said Lady Penelope — 'I differ extremely. I suppose you guess whom her discourse touched upon?'

'Indeed, your ladyship does my acuteness too much honour.'

'Did she not mention a Christian name?' said Lady Penelope. 'Your lordship is strangely dull this morning!'

'A Christian name! No, none that I heard — yes, she said something about — a Catherine, I think it was?'

'Catherine!' answered the lady. 'No, my lord, it was Clara; rather a rare name in this country, and belonging, I think, to a young lady of whom your lordship should know something, unless your evening flirtations with Lady Binks have blotted entirely out of your memory your morning visits to Shaws Castle. You are a bold man, my lord. I would advise you to include Mrs. Blower among the objects of your attention, and then you will have maid, wife, and widow upon your list.'

'Upon my honour, your ladyship is too severe,' said Lord Etherington: 'you surround yourself every evening with all

¹ See *Charity and Paupers*. Note 11.

that is clever and accomplished among the people here, and then you ridicule a poor secluded monster, who dare not approach your charmed circle, because he seeks for some amusement elsewhere. This is to tyrannise and not to reign : it is Turkish despotism.'

'Ah! my lord, I know you well, my lord,' said Lady Penelope. 'Sorry would your lordship be, had you not power to render yourself welcome to any circle which you may please to approach.'

'That is to say,' answered the lord, 'you will pardon me if I intrude on your ladyship's coterie this evening?'

'There is no society which Lord Etherington can think of frequenting where he will not be a welcome guest.'

'I will plead then at once my pardon and privilege this evening. And now (speaking as if he had succeeded in establishing some confidence with her ladyship), what do you really think of this blind story?'

'O, I must believe it concerns Miss Mowbray. She was always an odd girl — something about her I could never endure — a sort of effrontery — that is, perhaps, a harsh word, but a kind of assurance — an air of confidence — so that though I kept on a footing with her, because she was an orphan girl of good family, and because I really knew nothing positively bad of her, yet she sometimes absolutely shocked me.'

'Your ladyship, perhaps, would not think it right to give publicity to the story — at least, till you know exactly what it is?' said the earl, in a tone of suggestion.

'Depend upon it, that it is quite the worst — the very worst. You heard the woman say that she had exposed Clara to ruin; and you know she must have meant Clara Mowbray, because she was so anxious to tell the story to her brother, St. Ronan's.'

'Very true — I did not think of that,' answered Lord Etherington; 'still it would be hard on the poor girl if it should get abroad.'

'O, it will never get abroad for me,' said Lady Penelope: 'I would not tell the very wind of it. But then I cannot meet Miss Mowbray as formerly. I have a station in life to maintain, my lord, and I am under the necessity of being select in my society; it is a duty I owe the public, if it were even not my own inclination.'

'Certainly, my Lady Penelope,' said Lord Etherington; 'but then consider that, in a place where all eyes are neces-

sarily observant of your ladyship's behaviour, the least coldness on your part to Miss Mowbray — and, after all, we have nothing like assurance of anything being wrong there — would ruin her with the company here and with the world at large.'

'Oh! my lord,' answered Lady Penelope, 'as for the truth of the story, I have some private reasons of my own for "holding the strange tale devoutly true"; for I had a mysterious hint from a very worthy but a very singular man — your lordship knows how I adore originality — the clergyman of the parish, who made me aware there was something wrong about Miss Clara — something that — your lordship will excuse my speaking more plainly — Oh no! I fear — I fear it is all too true. You know Mr. Cargill, I suppose, my lord?'

'Yes — no — I — I think I have seen him,' said Lord Etherington. 'But how came the lady to make the parson her father-confessor? They have no auricular confession in the Kirk; it must have been with the purpose of marriage, I presume; let us hope that it took place — perhaps it really was so. Did he, Cargill — the minister, I mean — say anything of such a matter?'

'Not a word — not a word. I see where you are, my lord: you would put a good face on't.

They call'd it marriage, by that specious name
To veil the crime, and sanctify the shame —

Queen Dido for that. How the clergyman came into the secret I cannot tell: he is a very close man. But I know he will not hear of Miss Mowbray being married to any one, unquestionably because he knows that, in doing so, she would introduce disgrace into some honest family; and, truly, I am much of his mind, my lord.'

'Perhaps Mr. Cargill may know the lady is privately married already,' said the earl; 'I think that is the more natural inference, begging your ladyship's pardon for presuming to differ in opinion.'

Lady Penelope seemed determined not to take this view of the case.

'No, no — no, I tell you,' she replied; 'she cannot be married, for if she were married, how could the poor wretch say that she was ruined? You know there is a difference betwixt ruin and marriage.'

'Some people are said to have found them synonymous, Lady Penelope,' answered the earl.

'You are smart on me, my lord ; but still, in common parlance, when we say a woman is ruined, we mean quite the contrary of her being married : it is impossible for me to be more explicit upon such a topic, my lord.'

'I defer to your ladyship's better judgment,' said Lord Etherington. 'I only entreat you to observe a little caution in this business. I will make the strictest inquiries of this woman, and acquaint you with the result ; and I hope, out of regard to the respectable family of St. Ronan's, your ladyship will be in no hurry to intimate anything to Miss Mowbray's prejudice.'

'I certainly am no person to spread scandal, my lord,' answered the lady, drawing herself up ; 'at the same time, I must say, the Mowbrays have little claim on me for forbearance. I am sure I was the first person to bring this Spa into fashion, which has been a matter of such consequence to their estate ; and yet Mr. Mowbray set himself against me, my lord, in every possible sort of way, and encouraged the underbred people about him to behave very strangely. There was the business of building the Belvidere, which he would not permit to be done out of the stock-purse of the company, because I had given the workmen the plan and the orders ; and, then, about the tea-room, and the hour for beginning dancing, and about the subscription for Mr. Rymer's new *Tale of Chivalry* — in short, I owe no consideration to Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's.'

'But the poor young lady ?' said Lord Etherington.

'Oh ! the poor young lady ! the poor young lady can be as saucy as a rich young lady, I promise you. There was a business in which she used me scandalously, Lord Etherington ; it was about a very trifling matter — a shawl. Nobody minds dress less than I do, my lord — I thank Heaven my thoughts turn upon very different topics ; but it is in trifles that disrespect and unkindness are shown, and I have had a full share of both from Miss Clara, besides a good deal of impertinence from her brother upon the same subject.'

'There is but one way remains,' thought the earl, as they approached the Spa, 'and that is to work on the fears of this d—d vindictive blue-stockings'd wildcat. Your ladyship,' he said aloud, 'is aware what severe damages have been awarded in late cases where something approaching to scandal has been traced to ladies of consideration : the privileges of the tea-table have been found insufficient to protect some fair critics against the

consequences of too frank and liberal animadversion upon the characters of their friends. So pray, remember, that as yet we know very little on this subject.'

Lady Penelope loved money, and feared the law; and this hint, fortified by her acquaintance with Mowbray's love of his sister, and his irritable and revengeful disposition, brought her in a moment much nearer the temper in which Lord Etherington wished to leave her. She protested that no one could be more tender than she of the fame of the unfortunate, even supposing their guilt was fully proved, promised caution on the subject of the pauper's declaration, and hoped Lord Etherington would join her tea-party early in the evening, as she wished to make him acquainted with one or two of her *protégés*, whom, she was sure, his lordship would find deserving of his advice and countenance. Being by this time at the door of her own apartment, her ladyship took leave of the earl with a most gracious smile.

CHAPTER XXXIII

Disappointment

On the lee-beam lies the land, boys,
See all clear to reef each course ;
Let the fore-sheet go ; don't mind, boys,
Though the weather should be worse.

The Storm.

‘IT darkens round me like a tempest,’ thought Lord Etherington, as, with slow step, folded arms, and his white hat slouched over his brows, he traversed the short interval of space betwixt his own apartments and those of the Lady Penelope. In a buck of the old school, one of Congreve’s men of wit and pleasure about town, this would have been a departure from character ; but the present fine man does not derogate from his quality, even by exhibiting all the moody and gentlemanlike solemnity of Master Stephen. So Lord Etherington was at liberty to carry on his reflections without attracting observation. ‘I have put a stopper into the mouth of that old vinegar-cruet of quality, but the acidity of her temper will soon dissolve the charm. And what to do?’

As he looked round him, he saw his trusty valet Solmes, who, touching his hat with due respect, said, as he passed him, ‘Your lordship’s letters are in your private despatch-box.’

Simple as these words were, and indifferent the tone in which they were spoken, their import made Lord Etherington’s heart bound as if his fate had depended on the accents. He intimated no farther interest in the communication, however, than to desire Solmes to be below, in case he should ring ; and with these words entered his apartment, and barred and bolted the door, even before he looked on the table where his despatch-box was placed.

Lord Etherington had, as is usual, one key to the box which held his letters, his confidential servant being entrusted with the other ; so that, under the protection of a patent lock,

his despatches escaped all risk of being tampered with — a precaution not altogether unnecessary on the part of those who frequent hotels and lodging-houses.

'By your leave, Mr. Bramah,' said the earl, as he applied the key, jesting, as it were, with his own agitation, as he would have done with that of a third party. The lid was raised, and displayed the packet, the appearance and superscription of which had attracted his observation but a short while before in the post-office. *Then* he would have given much to be possessed of the opportunity which was now in his power; but many pause on the brink of a crime who have contemplated it at a distance without scruple. Lord Etherington's first impulse had led him to poke the fire; and he held in his hand the letter which he was more than half tempted to commit, without even breaking the seal, to the fiery element. But, though sufficiently familiarised with guilt, he was not as yet acquainted with it in its basest shapes: he had not yet acted with meanness, or at least with what the world terms such. He had been a duellist, the manners of the age authorised it; a libertine, the world excused it to his youth and condition; a bold and successful gambler, for that quality he was admired and envied; and a thousand other inaccuracies, to which these practices and habits lead, were easily slurred over in a man of quality, with fortune and spirit to support his rank. But his present meditated act was of a different kind. Tell it not in Bond Street, whisper it not on St. James's pavement! it amounted to an act of petty larceny, for which the code of honour would admit of no composition.

Lord Etherington, under the influence of these recollections, stood for a few minutes suspended. But the devil always finds logic to convince his followers. He recollected the wrong done to his mother, and to himself, her offspring, to whom his father had, in the face of the whole world, imparted the hereditary rights of which he was now, by a posthumous deed, endeavouring to deprive the memory of the one and the expectations of the other. Surely, the right being his own, he had a full title, by the most effectual means, whatever such means might be, to repel all attacks on that right, and even destroy, if necessary, the documents by which his enemies were prosecuting their unjust plans against his honour and interest.

This reasoning prevailed, and Lord Etherington again held the devoted packet above the flames; when it occurred to him that, his resolution being taken, he ought to carry it into

execution as effectually as possible ; and to do so, it was necessary to know that the packet actually contained the papers which he was desirous to destroy.

Never did a doubt arise in juster time ; for no sooner had the seal burst and the envelope rustled under his fingers than he perceived, to his utter consternation, that he held in his hand only the copies of the deeds for which Francis Tyrrel had written, the originals of which he had too sanguinely concluded would be forwarded according to his requisition. A letter from a partner of the house with which they were deposited stated that they had not felt themselves at liberty, in the absence of the head of their firm, to whom these papers had been committed, to part with them even to Mr. Tyrrel, though they had proceeded so far as to open the parcel, and now transmitted to him formal copies of the papers contained in it, which, they presumed, would serve Mr. Tyrrel's purpose for consulting counsel, or the like. They themselves, in a case of so much delicacy, and in the absence of their principal partner, were determined to retain the originals, unless called to produce them in a court of justice.

With a solemn imprecation on the formality and absurdity of the writer, Lord Etherington let the letter of advice drop from his hand into the fire, and throwing himself into a chair, passed his hand across his eyes, as if their very power of sight had been blighted by what he had read. His title and his paternal fortune, which he thought but an instant before might be rendered unchallengeable by a single movement of his hand, seemed now on the verge of being lost for ever. His rapid recollection failed not to remind him of what was less known to the world, that his early and profuse expenditure had greatly dilapidated his maternal fortune ; and that the estate of Nettlewood, which five minutes ago he only coveted as a wealthy man desires increase of his store, must now be acquired, if he would avoid being a poor and embarrassed spendthrift. To impede his possessing himself of this property, fate had restored to the scene the penitent of the morning, who, as he had too much reason to believe, was returned to this neighbourhood to do justice to Clara Mowbray, and who was not unlikely to put the whole story of the marriage on its right footing. She, however, might be got rid of ; and it might still be possible to hurry Miss Mowbray, by working on her fears, or through the agency of her brother, into a union with him while he still preserved the title of Lord Etherington. This, therefore, he

resolved to secure, if effort or if intrigue could carry the point ; nor was it the least consideration that, should he succeed, he would obtain over Tyrrel, his successful rival, such a triumph as would be sufficient to embitter the tranquillity of his whole life.

In a few minutes, his rapid and contriving invention had formed a plan for securing the sole advantage which seemed to remain open for him ; and conscious that he had no time to lose, he entered immediately upon the execution.

The bell summoned Solmes to his lordship's apartment, when the earl, as coolly as if he had hoped to dupe his experienced valet by such an assertion, said, 'You have brought me a packet designed for some man at the Aultoun ; let it be sent to him. Stay, I will re-seal it first.'

He accordingly re-sealed the packet, containing all the writings, excepting the letter of advice (which he had burnt), and gave it to the valet, with the caution, 'I wish you would not make such blunders in future.'

'I beg your lordship's pardon, I will take better care again — thought it was addressed to your lordship.' So answered Solmes, too knowing to give the least look of intelligence, far less to remind the earl that his own directions had occasioned the mistake of which he complained.

'Solmes,' continued the earl, 'you need not mention your blunder at the post-office, it would only occasion tattle in this idle place ; but be sure that the gentleman has his letter. And, Solmes, I see Mr. Mowbray walk across ; ask him to dine with me to-day at five. I have a headache, and cannot face the clamour of the savages who feed at the public table. And let me see — make my compliments to Lady Penelope Penfeather — I will certainly have the honour of waiting on her ladyship this evening to tea, agreeably to her very boring invitation received ; write her a proper card, and word it your own way. Bespeak dinner for two, and see you have some of that batch of Burgundy.' The servant was retiring, when his master added, 'Stay a moment — I have a more important business than I have yet mentioned. Solmes, you have managed devilish ill about the woman Irwin !'

'I, my lord ?' answered Solmes.

'Yes, you, sir ; did you not tell me she had gone to the West Indies with a friend of yours, and did not I give them a couple of hundred pounds for passage-money ?'

'Yes, my lord,' replied the valet.

'Ay, but now it proves, "No, my lord,"' said Lord Etherington; 'for she has found her way back to this country in miserable plight — half-starved, and, no doubt, willing to do or say anything for a livelihood. How has this happened?'

'Biddulph must have taken her cash and turned her loose, my lord,' answered Solmes, as if he had been speaking of the most commonplace transaction in the world; 'but I know the woman's nature so well, and am so much master of her history, that I can carry her off the country in twenty-four hours, and place her where she will never think of returning, provided your lordship can spare me so long.'

'About it directly; but I can tell you that you will find the woman in a very penitential humour, and very ill in health to boot.'

'I am sure of my game,' answered Solmes; 'with submission to your lordship, I think if death and her good angel had hold of one of that woman's arms, the devil and I could make a shift to lead her away by the other.'

'Away and about it, then,' said Etherington. 'But, harkye, Solmes, be kind to her, and see all her wants relieved. I have done her mischief enough, though nature and the devil had done half the work to my hand.'

Solmes at length was permitted to withdraw to execute his various commissions, with an assurance that his services would not be wanted for the next twenty-four hours.

'Soh!' said the earl, as his agent withdrew, 'there is a spring put in motion which, well oiled, will move the whole machine. And here, in lucky time, comes Harry Jekyl — I hear his whistle on the stairs. There is a silly lightness of heart about that fellow which I envy, while I despise it; but he is welcome now, for I want him.'

Jekyl entered accordingly, and broke out with, 'I am glad to see one of your fellows laying a cloth for two in your parlour, Etherington; I was afraid you were going down among these confounded bores again to-day.'

'You are not to be one of the two, Hal,' answered Lord Etherington.

'No! then I may be a third, I hope, if not second?'

'Neither first, second, nor third, captain. The truth is, I want a *tête-à-tête* with Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's,' replied the earl; 'and, besides, I have to beg the very particular favour of you to go again to that fellow Martigny. It is time that he should produce his papers, if he has any, of which, for one, I

do not believe a word. He has had ample time to hear from London; and I think I have delayed long enough in an important matter upon his bare assertion.'

'I cannot blame your impatience,' said Jekyl, 'and I will go on your errand instantly. As you waited on my advice, I am bound to find an end to your suspense. At the same time, if the man is not possessed of such papers as he spoke of, I must own he is happy in a command of consummate assurance which might set up the whole roll of attorneys.'

'You will be soon able to judge of that,' said Lord Etherington; 'and now, off with you. Why do you look at me so anxiously?'

'I cannot tell. I have strange forebodings about this *tête-à-tête* with Mowbray. You should spare him, Etherington; he is not your match — wants both judgment and temper.'

'Tell him so, Jekyl,' answered the earl, 'and his proud Scotch stomach will be up in an instant, and he will pay you with a shot for your pains. Why, he thinks himself cock of the walk, this strutting bantam, notwithstanding the lesson I gave him before. And what do you think? He has the impudence to talk about my attentions to Lady Binks as inconsistent with the prosecution of my suit to his sister! Yes, Hal, this awkward Scotch laird, that has scarce tact enough to make love to a ewe-milker, or, at best, to some daggletailed soubrette, has the assurance to start himself as my rival!'

'Then, good-night to St. Ronan's! this will be a fatal dinner to him. Etherington, I know by that laugh you are bent on mischief; I have a great mind to give him a hint.'

'I wish you would,' answered the earl; 'it would all turn to my account.'

'Do you defy me? Well, if I meet him, I will put him on his guard.'

The friends parted; and it was not long ere Jekyl encountered Mowbray on one of the public walks.

'You dine with Etherington to-day?' said the captain. 'Forgive me, Mr. Mowbray, if I say one single word — Beware.'

'Of what should I beware, Captain Jekyl,' answered Mowbray, 'when I dine with a friend of your own, and a man of honour?'

'Certainly Lord Etherington is both, Mr. Mowbray; but he loves play, and is too hard for most people.'

'I thank you for your hint, Captain Jekyl; I am a raw Scotchman, it is true, but yet I know a thing or two. Fair

play is always presumed amongst gentlemen; and that taken for granted, I have the vanity to think I need no one's caution on the subject, not even Captain Jekyl's, though his experience must needs be so much superior to mine.'

'In that case, sir,' said Jekyl, bowing coldly, 'I have no more to say, and I hope there is no harm done. Conceited coxcomb!' he added, mentally, as they parted, 'how truly did Etherington judge of him, and what an ass was I to intermeddle! I hope Etherington will strip him of every feather!'

He pursued his walk in quest of Tyrrel, and Mowbray proceeded to the apartments of the earl, in a temper of mind well suited to the purposes of the latter, who judged of his disposition accurately when he permitted Jekyl to give his well-meant warning. To be supposed, by a man of acknowledged fashion, so decidedly inferior to his antagonist—to be considered as an object of compassion, and made the subject of a good-boy warning, was gall and bitterness to his proud spirit, which, the more that he felt a conscious inferiority in the arts which they all cultivated, struggled the more to preserve the footing of at least apparent equality.

Since the first memorable party at piquet, Mowbray had never hazarded his luck with Lord Etherington, except for trifling stakes; but his conceit led him to suppose that he now fully understood his play, and, agreeably to the practice of those who have habituated themselves to gambling, he had every now and then felt a yearning to try for his revenge. He wished also to be out of Lord Etherington's debt, feeling galled under a sense of pecuniary obligation, which hindered his speaking his mind to him fully upon the subject of his flirtation with Lady Binks, which he justly considered as an insult to his family, considering the footing on which the earl seemed desirous to stand with Clara Mowbray. From these obligations a favourable evening might free him, and Mowbray was, in fact, indulging in a waking dream to this purpose when Jekyl interrupted him. His untimely warning only excited a spirit of contradiction, and a determination to show the adviser how little he was qualified to judge of his talents; and in this humour, his ruin, which was the consequence of that afternoon, was far from seeming to be the premeditated, or even the voluntary, work of the Earl of Etherington.

On the contrary, the victim himself was the first to propose play—deep play—double stakes; while Lord Etherington, on the other hand, often proposed to diminish their game, or to

break off entirely ; but it was always with an affectation of superiority, which only stimulated Mowbray to farther and more desperate risks ; and, at last, when Mowbray became his debtor to an overwhelming amount, his circumstances considered, the earl threw down the cards and declared he should be too late for Lady Penelope's tea-party, to which he was positively engaged.

'Will you not give me my revenge ?' said Mowbray, taking up the cards and shuffling them with fierce anxiety.

'Not now, Mowbray ; we have played too long already : you have lost too much — more than perhaps is convenient for you to pay.'

Mowbray gnashed his teeth, in spite of his resolution to maintain an exterior, at least, of firmness.

'You can take your time, you know,' said the earl ; 'a note of hand will suit me as well as the money.'

'No, by G— !' answered Mowbray, 'I will not be so taken in a second time : I had better have sold myself to the devil than to your lordship — I have never been my own man since.'

'These are not very kind expressions, Mowbray,' said the earl ; 'you *would* play, and they that will play must expect sometimes to lose —'

'And they who win will expect to be paid,' said Mowbray, breaking in. 'I know that as well as you, my lord, and you shall be paid : I will pay you — I will pay you, by G— ! Do you make any doubt, that I will pay you, my lord ?'

'You look as if you thought of paying me in sharp coin,' said Lord Etherington ; 'and I think that would scarce be consistent with the terms we stand upon towards each other.'

'By my soul, my lord,' said Mowbray, 'I cannot tell what these terms are ; and to be at my wit's end at once, I should be glad to know. You set out upon paying addresses to my sister, and with your visits and opportunities at Shaws Castle, I cannot find the matter makes the least progress : it keeps moving without advancing, like a child's rocking-horse. Perhaps you think that you have curbed me up so tightly that I dare not stir in the matter ; but you will find it otherwise. Your lordship may keep a haram if you will, but my sister shall not enter it.'

'You are angry, and therefore you are unjust,' said Etherington ; 'you know well enough it is your sister's fault that there is any delay. I am most willing — most desirous — to call her Lady Etherington : nothing but her unlucky prejudices against

me have retarded a union which I have so many reasons for desiring.'

'Well,' replied Mowbray, 'that shall be my business. I know no reason she can pretend to decline a marriage so honourable to her house, and which is approved of by me, that house's head. That matter shall be arranged in twenty-four hours.'

'It will do me the most sensible pleasure,' said Lord Etherington; 'you shall soon see how sincerely I desire your alliance; and as for the trifle you have lost——'

'It is no trifle to me, my lord: it is my ruin. But it shall be paid; and let me tell your lordship, you may thank your good luck for it more than your good play.'

'We will say no more of it at present, if you please,' said Lord Etherington, 'to-morrow is a new day; and if you will take my advice, you will not be too harsh with your sister. A little firmness is seldom amiss with young women, but severity——'

'I will pray your lordship to spare me your advice on this subject. However valuable it may be in other respects, I can, I take it, speak to my own sister in my own way.'

'Since you are so caustically disposed, Mowbray,' answered the earl, 'I presume you will not honour her ladyship's teatable to-night, though I believe it will be the last of the season?'

'And why should you think so, my lord?' answered Mowbray, whose losses had rendered him testy and contradictory upon every subject that was started. 'Why should not I pay my respects to Lady Penelope, or any other tabby of quality? I have no title, indeed; but I suppose that my family——'

'Entitles you to become a canon of Strasburgh, doubtless. But you do not seem in a very Christian mood for taking orders. All I meant to say was, that you and Lady Pen were not used to be on such a good footing.'

'Well, she sent me a card for her blow-out,' said Mowbray, 'and so I am resolved to go. When I have been there half an hour, I will ride up to Shaws Castle, and you shall hear of my speed in wooing for you to-morrow morning.'

CHAPTER XXXIV

A Tea-Party

Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round ;
And while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups
That cheer, but not inebriate, wait on each,
Thus let us welcome peaceful evening in.

COWPER'S *Task*.

THE approach of the cold and rainy season had now so far thinned the company at the Well that, in order to secure the necessary degree of crowd upon her tea-nights, Lady Penelope was obliged to employ some coaxing towards those whom she had considered as much under par in society. Even the doctor and Mrs. Blower were graciously smiled upon ; for their marriage was now an arranged affair, and the event was of a nature likely to spread the reputation of the Spa among wealthy widows and medical gentlemen of more skill than practice. So in they came, the doctor smirking, gallanting, and performing all the bustling parade of settled and arranged courtship, with much of that grace wherewith a turkey-cock goes through the same ceremony. Old Touchwood had also attended her ladyship's summons, chiefly, it may be supposed, from his restless, fidgety disposition, which seldom suffered him to remain absent even from those places of resort of which he usually professed his detestation. There was, besides, Mr. Winterblossom, who, in his usual spirit of quiet epicurism and self-indulgence, was, under the fire of a volley of compliments to Lady Penelope, scheming to secure for himself an early cup of tea. There was Lady Binks also, with the wonted degree of sullenness in her beautiful face, angry at her husband as usual, and not disposed to be pleased with Lord Etherington for being absent, when she desired to excite Sir Bingo's jealousy. This she had discovered to be the most effectual way of tormenting the baronet, and she rejoiced in it

with the savage glee of a hackney coachman, who has found a 'raw,' where he can make his poor jade feel the whip. The rest of the company were also in attendance as usual. MacTurk himself was present, notwithstanding that he thought it an egregious waste of hot water to bestow it upon compounding any mixture saving punch. He had of late associated himself a good deal with the traveller; not that they by any means resembled each other in temper or opinions, but rather because there was that degree of difference betwixt them which furnished perpetual subject for dispute and discussion. They were not long, on the present occasion, ere they lighted on a fertile source of controversy.

'Never tell me of your points of honour,' said Touchwood, raising his voice altogether above the general tone of polite conversation — 'all humbug, Captain MacTurk — mere hair-traps to springe woodcocks; men of sense break through them.'

'Upon my word, sir,' said the captain, 'and myself is surprised to hear you; for, look you, sir, every man's honour is the breath of his nostrils, Cot tamn!'

'Then, let men breathe through their mouths, and be d—d,' returned the controversialist. 'I tell you, sir, that, besides its being forbidden, both by law and Gospel, it's an idiotical and totally absurd practice, that of duelling. An honest savage has more sense than to practise it: he takes his bow or his gun, as the thing may be, and shoots his enemy from behind a bush. And a very good way; for you see there can, in that case, be only one man's death between them.'

'Saul of my body, sir,' said the captain, 'gin ye promulgate sic doctrines among the good company, it's my belief you will bring somebody to the gallows.'

'Thank ye, captain, with all my heart; but I stir up no quarrels: I leave war to them that live by it. I only say that; except our old, stupid ancestors in the north-west here, I know no country so silly as to harbour this custom of duelling. It is unknown in Africa among the negroes, in America.'

'Don't tell me that,' said the captain; 'a Yankee will fight with muskets and buck-shot, rather than sit still with an affront. I should know Jonathan, I think.'

'Altogether unknown among the thousand tribes of India.'

'I'll be tamned, then!' said Captain MacTurk. 'Was I not in Tippoo's prison at Bangalore? and, when the joyful day of our liberation came, did we not solemnise it with fourteen little affairs, whereof we had been laying the foundation in our

house of captivity, as Holy Writ has it, and never went farther to settle them than the glacis of the fort? By my soul, you would have thought there was a smart skirmish, the firing was so close; and did not I, Captain MacTurk, fight three of them myself, without moving my foot from the place I set it on?’

‘And pray, sir, what might be the result of this Christian mode of giving thanks for your deliverance?’ demanded Mr. Touchwood.

‘A small list of casualties, after all,’ said the captain: ‘one killed on the spot, one died of his wounds, two wounded severely, three ditto slightly, and little Duncan Macphail reported missing. We were out of practice, after such long confinement. So you see how we manage matters in India, my dear friend.’

‘You are to understand,’ replied Touchwood, ‘that I spoke only of the heathen natives, who, heathen as they are, live in the light of their own moral reason, and among whom ye shall therefore see better examples of practical morality than among such as yourselves, who, though calling yourselves Christians, have no more knowledge of the true acceptation and meaning of your religion than if you had left your Christianity at the Cape of Good Hope, as they say of you, and forgot to take it up when you came back again.’

‘Py Cot! and I can tell you, sir,’ said the captain, elevating at once his voice and his nostrils, and snuffing the air with a truculent and indignant visage, ‘that I will not permit you or any man to throw any such scandal on my character. I thank Cot, I can bring good witness that I am as good a Christian as another, for a poor sinner, as the best of us are; and I am ready to justify my religion with my sword, Cot tamn! Compare my own self with a parcel of black heathen bodies and natives, that were never in the inner side of a kirk whilst they lived, but go about worshipping stocks and stones, and swinging themselves upon bamboos, like peasts, as they are!’

An indignant growling in his throat, which sounded like the acquiescence of his inward man in the indignant proposition which his external organs thus expressed, concluded this haughty speech, which, however, made not the least impression on Touchwood, who cared as little for angry tones and looks as he did for fine speeches; so that it is likely a quarrel between the Christian preceptor and the peacemaker might have occurred for the amusement of the company, had not

the attention of both, but particularly that of Touchwood, been diverted from the topic of debate by the entrance of Lord Etherington and Mowbray.

The former was, as usual, all grace, smiles, and gentleness. Yet, contrary to his wonted custom, which usually was, after a few general compliments, to attach himself particularly to Lady Binks, the earl, on the present occasion, avoided the side of the room on which that beautiful but sullen idol held her station, and attached himself exclusively to Lady Penelope Penfeather, enduring, without flinching, the strange variety of conceited *bavardage* which that lady's natural parts and acquired information enabled her to pour forth with unparalleled profusion.

An honest heathen, one of Plutarch's heroes, if I mistake not, dreamed, once upon a night, that the figure of Proserpina, whom he had long worshipped, visited his slumbers with an angry and vindictive countenance, and menaced him with vengeance, in resentment of his having neglected her altars, with the usual fickleness of a polytheist, for those of some more fashionable divinity. Not that goddess of the infernal regions herself could assume a more haughty or more displeased countenance than that with which Lady Binks looked from time to time upon Lord Etherington, as if to warn him of the consequence of this departure from the allegiance which the young earl had hitherto manifested towards her, and which seemed now, she knew not why, unless it were for the purpose of public insult, to be transferred to her rival. Perilous as her eye-glances were, and much as they menaced, Lord Etherington felt at this moment the importance of soothing Lady Penelope to silence on the subject of the invalid's confession of that morning to be more pressing than that of appeasing the indignation of Lady Binks. The former was a case of the most urgent necessity; the latter, if he was at all anxious on the subject, might, he perhaps thought, be trusted to time. Had the ladies continued on a tolerable footing together, he might have endeavoured to conciliate both. But the bitterness of their long-suppressed feud had greatly increased, now that it was probable the end of the season was to separate them, in all likelihood for ever; so that Lady Penelope had no longer any motive for countenancing Lady Binks, or the lady of Sir Bingo for desiring Lady Penelope's countenance. The wealth and lavish expense of the one was no longer to render more illustrious the suit of her right honourable friend, nor was the

society of Lady Penelope likely to be soon again useful or necessary to Lady Binks; so that neither were any longer desirous to suppress symptoms of the mutual contempt and dislike which they had long nourished for each other; and whoever should, in this decisive hour, take part with one had little henceforward to expect from her rival. What farther and more private reasons Lady Binks might have to resent the defection of Lord Etherington have never come with certainty to our knowledge; but it was said there had been high words between them on the floating report that his lordship's visits to Shaws Castle were dictated by the wish to find a bride there.

Women's wits are said to be quick in spying the surest means of avenging a real or supposed slight. After biting her pretty lips, and revolving in her mind the readiest means of vengeance, fate threw in her way young Mowbray of St. Ronan's. She looked at him, and endeavoured to fix his attention with a nod and gracious smile, such as in an ordinary mood would have instantly drawn him to her side. On receiving in answer only a vacant glance and a bow, she was led to observe him more attentively, and was induced to believe, from his wavering look, varying complexion, and unsteady step, that he had been drinking unusually deep. Still his eye was less that of an intoxicated than of a disturbed and desperate man, one whose faculties were engrossed by deep and turbid reflection, which withdrew him from the passing scene.

'Do you observe how ill Mr. Mowbray looks?' said she, in a loud whisper; 'I hope he has not heard what Lady Penelope was just now saying of his family?'

'Unless he hears it from you, my lady,' answered Mr. Touchwood, who, upon Mowbray's entrance, had broken off his discourse with MacTurk, 'I think there is little chance of his learning it from any other person.'

'What is the matter?' said Mowbray, sharply, addressing Chatterly and Winterblossom; but the one shrunk nervously from the question, protesting, he indeed had not been precisely attending to what had been passing among the ladies, and Winterblossom bowed out of the scrape with quiet and cautious politeness. 'He really had not given particular attention to what was passing. I was negotiating with Mrs. Jones for an additional lump of sugar to my coffee. Egad, it was so difficult a piece of diplomacy,' he added, sinking his voice, 'that I have an idea her ladyship calculates the West India produce by grains and pennyweights.'

The innuendo, if designed to make Mowbray smile, was far from succeeding. He stepped forward, with more than usual stiffness in his air, which was never entirely free from self-consequence, and said to Lady Binks, 'May I request to know of your ladyship what particular respecting my family had the honour to engage the attention of the company?'

'I was only a listener, Mr. Mowbray,' returned Lady Binks, with evident enjoyment of the rising indignation which she read in his countenance; 'not being queen of the night, I am not at all disposed to be answerable for the turn of the conversation.'

Mowbray, in no humour to bear jesting, yet afraid to expose himself by farther inquiry in a company so public, darted a fierce look at Lady Penelope, then in close conversation with Lord Etherington, advanced a step or two towards them, then, as if checking himself, turned on his heel and left the room. A few minutes afterwards, and when certain satirical nods and winks were circulating among the assembly, a waiter slid a piece of paper into Mrs. Jones's hand, who, on looking at the contents, seemed about to leave the room.

'Jones—Jones!' exclaimed Lady Penelope, in surprise and displeasure.

'Only the key of the tea-caddie, your ladyship,' answered Jones; 'I will be back in an instant.'

'Jones—Jones!' again exclaimed her mistress, 'here is enough'—'of tea,' she would have said; but Lord Etherington was so near her that she was ashamed to complete the sentence, and had only hope in Jones's quickness of apprehension, and the prospect that she would be unable to find the key which she went in search of.

Jones, meanwhile, tripped off to a sort of housekeeper's apartment, of which she was *locum tenens* for the evening, for the more ready supply of whatever might be wanted on Lady Penelope's night, as it was called. Here she found Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's, whom she instantly began to assail with, 'La! now, Mr. Mowbray, you are such another gentleman! I am sure you will make me lose my place—I'll swear you will. What can you have to say, that you could not as well put off for an hour?'

'I want to know, Jones,' answered Mowbray, in a different tone, perhaps, from what the damsel expected, 'what your lady was just now saying about my family.'

'Pshaw! was that all?' answered Mrs. Jones. 'What should

she be saying? Nonsense. Who minds what she says? I am sure I never do, for one.'

'Nay, but, my dear Jones,' said Mowbray, 'I insist upon knowing. I must know, and I *will* know.'

'La! Mr. Mowbray, why should I make mischief? As I live, I hear some one coming! and if you were found speaking with me here — indeed, indeed, some one is coming!'

'The devil may come, if he will!' said Mowbray, 'but we do not part, pretty mistress, till you tell me what I wish to know.'

'Lord, sir, you frighten me!' answered Jones; 'but all the room heard it as well as I. It was about Miss Mowbray — and that my lady would be shy of her company hereafter, for that she was — she was —'

'For that my sister was *what*?' said Mowbray, fiercely, seizing her arm.

'Lord, sir, you terrify me!' said Jones, beginning to cry; 'at any rate, it was not I that said it — it was Lady Penelope.'

'And what was it the old, adder-tongued madwoman dared to say of Clara Mowbray? Speak out plainly, and directly, or, by Heaven, I'll make you!'

'Hold, sir — hold, for God's sake! you will break my arm,' answered the terrified handmaiden. 'I am sure I know no harm of Miss Mowbray; only, my lady spoke as if she was no better than she ought to be. Lord, sir, there is some one listening at the door!' and making a spring out of his grasp, she hastened back to the room in which the company were assembled.

Mowbray stood petrified at the news he had heard, ignorant alike what could be the motive for a calumny so atrocious, and uncertain what he were best do to put a stop to the scandal. To his farther confusion, he was presently convinced of the truth of Mrs. Jones's belief that they had been watched, for, as he went to the door of the apartment, he was met by Mr. Touchwood.

'What has brought you here, sir?' said Mowbray, sternly.

'Hoitie toitie,' answered the traveller, 'why, how came *you* here, if you go to that, squire? Egad, Lady Penelope is trembling for her souchong, so I just took a step here to save her ladyship the trouble of looking after Mrs. Jones in person, which, I think, might have been a worse interruption than mine, Mr. Mowbray.'

'Pshaw, sir, you talk nonsense,' said Mowbray; 'the tea-room

is so infernally hot, that I had sat down here a moment to draw breath, when the young woman came in.'

'And you are going to run away, now the old gentleman is come in?' said Touchwood. 'Come, sir, I am more your friend than you may think.'

'Sir, you are intrusive; I want nothing that you can give me,' said Mowbray.

'That is a mistake,' answered the senior; 'for I can supply you with what most young men want — money and wisdom.'

'You will do well to keep both till they are wanted,' said Mowbray.

'Why, so I would, squire, only that I have taken something of a fancy for your family; and they are supposed to have wanted cash and good counsel for two generations, if not for three.'

'Sir,' said Mowbray, angrily, 'you are too old either to play the buffoon or to get buffoon's payment.'

'Which is like monkey's allowance, I suppose,' said the traveller, 'more kicks than halfpence. Well, at least I am not young enough to quarrel with boys for bullying. I'll convince you, however, Mr. Mowbray, that I know some more of your affairs than what you give me credit for.'

'It may be,' answered Mowbray, 'but you will oblige me more by minding your own.'

'Very like; meantime, your losses to-night to my Lord Etherington are no trifle, and no secret neither.'

'Mr. Touchwood, I desire to know where you had your information?' said Mowbray.

'A matter of very little consequence compared to its truth or falsehood, Mr. Mowbray,' answered the old gentleman.

'But of the last importance to me, sir,' said Mowbray. 'In a word, had you such information by or through means of Lord Etherington? Answer me this single question, and then I shall know better what to think on the subject.'

'Upon my honour,' said Touchwood, 'I neither had my information from Lord Etherington directly nor indirectly. I say thus much to give you satisfaction, and I now expect you will hear me with patience.'

'Forgive me, sir,' interrupted Mowbray, 'one farther question. I understand something was said in disparagement of my sister just as I entered the tea-room?'

'Hem — hem — hem!' said Touchwood, hesitating. 'I am sorry your ears have served you so well: something there *was*

said lightly — something that can be easily explained, I dare say. And now, Mr. Mowbray, let me speak a few serious words with you.'

'And now, Mr. Touchwood, we have no more to say to each other; good evening to you.'

He brushed past the old man, who in vain endeavoured to stop him, and, hurrying to the stable, demanded his horse. It was ready saddled, and waited his orders; but even the short time that was necessary to bring it to the door of the stable was exasperating to Mowbray's impatience. Not less exasperating was the constant interceding voice of Touchwood, who, in tones alternately plaintive and snappish, kept on a string of expostulations.

'Mr. Mowbray, only five words with you. Mr. Mowbray, you will repent this. Is this a night to ride in, Mr. Mowbray? My stars, sir, if you would but have five minutes' patience!'

Curses, not loud but deep, muttered in the throat of the impatient laird, were the only reply, until his horse was brought out, when, staying no farther question, he sprung into the saddle. The poor horse paid for the delay, which could not be laid to his charge. Mowbray struck him hard with his spurs so soon as he was in his seat; the noble animal reared, bolted, and sprung forward like a deer, over stock and stone, the nearest road — and we are aware it was a rough one — to Shaws Castle. There is a sort of instinct by which horses perceive the humour of their riders, and are furious and impetuous, or dull and sluggish, as if to correspond with it; and Mowbray's gallant steed seemed on this occasion to feel all the stings of his master's internal ferment, although not again urged with the spur. The hostler stood listening to the clash of the hoofs, succeeding each other in thick and close gallop, until they died away in the distant woodland.

'If St. Ronan's reach home this night with his neck unbroken,' muttered the fellow, 'the devil must have it in keeping.'

'Mercy on us!' said the traveller, 'he rides like a Bedouin Arab! but in the desert there are neither trees to cross the road, nor cleughs, nor linns, nor floods, nor fords. Well, I must set to work myself, or this gear will get worse than even I can mend. Here you, hostler, let me have your best pair of horses instantly to Shaws Castle.'

'To Shaws Castle, sir?' said the man, with some surprise.

'Yes; do you not know such a place?'

'In troth, sir, sae few company go there, except on the great

ball day, that we have had time to forget the road to it ; but St. Ronan's was here even now, sir.'

'Ay, what of that ? He has ridden on to get supper ready ; so, turn out without loss of time.'

'At your pleasure, sir,' said the fellow, and called to the postilion accordingly.

CHAPTER XXXV

Debate

Sedet post equitem atra cura.

Still though the headlong cavalier,
O'er rough and smooth, in wild career,
Seems racing with the wind,
His sad companion, — ghastly pale,
And darksome as a widow's veil,
CARE — keeps her seat behind.

HORACE.

WELL was it that night for Mowbray that he had always piqued himself on his horses, and that the animal on which he was then mounted was as sure-footed and sagacious as he was mettled and fiery. For those who observed next day the print of the hoofs on the broken and rugged track through which the creature had been driven at full speed by his furious master might easily see that in more than a dozen of places the horse and rider had been within a few inches of destruction. One bough of a gnarled and stunted oak tree, which stretched across the road, seemed in particular to have opposed an almost fatal barrier to the horseman's career. In striking his head against this impediment, the force of the blow had been broken in some measure by a high-crowned hat, yet the violence of the shock was sufficient to shiver the branch to pieces. Fortunately, it was already decayed; but, even in that state, it was subject of astonishment to every one that no fatal damage had been sustained in so formidable an encounter. Mowbray himself was unconscious of the accident.

Scarcely aware that he had been riding at an unusual rate, scarce sensible that he had ridden faster perhaps than ever he followed the hounds, Mowbray alighted at his stable door, and flung the bridle to his groom, who held up his hands in astonishment when he beheld the condition of the favourite horse; but,

concluding that his master must be intoxicated, he prudently forbore to make any observations.

No sooner did the unfortunate traveller suspend that rapid motion by which he seemed to wish to annihilate, as far as possible, time and space, in order to reach the place he had now attained, than it seemed to him as if he would have given the world that seas and deserts had lain between him and the house of his fathers, as well as that only sister with whom he was now about to have a decisive interview.

'But the place and the hour are arrived,' he said, biting his lip with anguish; 'this explanation must be decisive; and whatever evils may attend it, suspense must be ended now, at once and for ever.'

He entered the castle, and took the light from the old domestic, who, hearing the clatter of his horse's feet, had opened the door to receive him.

'Is my sister in her parlour?' he asked, but in so hollow a voice that the old man only answered the question by another — 'Was his honour well?'

'Quite well, Patrick — never better in my life,' said Mowbray; and turning his back on the old man, as if to prevent his observing whether his countenance and his words corresponded, he pursued his way to his sister's apartment. The sound of his step upon the passage roused Clara from a reverie, perhaps a sad one; and she had trimmed her lamp and stirred her fire, so slow did he walk, before he at length entered her apartment.

'You are a good boy, brother,' she said, 'to come thus early home; and I have some good news for your reward. The groom has fetched back Trimmer. He was lying by the dead hare, and he had chased him as far as Drumlyford; the shepherd had carried him to the shieling, till some one should claim him.'

'I would he had hanged him, with all my heart!' said Mowbray.

'How! hang Trimmer — your favourite Trimmer, that has beat the whole country? and it was only this morning you were half-crying because he was amissing, and like to murder man and mother's son!'

'The better I like any living thing,' answered Mowbray, 'the more reason I have for wishing it dead and at rest; for neither I nor anything that I love will ever be happy more.'

'You cannot frighten me, John, with these flights,' answered

Clara, trembling, although she endeavoured to look unconcerned. 'You have used me to them too often.'

'It is well for you then; you will be ruined without the shock of surprise.'

'So much the better. We have been,' said Clara,

'So constantly in poortith's sight,
The thoughts on 't gie us little fright.

So say I with honest Robert Burns.'

'D—n Burns and his trash!' said Mowbray, with the impatience of a man determined to be angry with everything but himself, who was the real source of the evil.

'And why damn poor Burns?' said Clara, composedly; 'it is not his fault if you have not risen a winner, for that, I suppose, is the cause of all this uproar.'

'Would it not make any one lose patience,' said Mowbray, 'to hear her quoting the rhapsodies of a hobnail'd peasant, when a man is speaking of the downfall of an ancient house? Your ploughman, I suppose, becoming one degree poorer than he was born to be, would only go without his dinner or without his usual potation of ale. His comrades would cry "poor fellow!" and let him eat out of their kit, and drink out of their bicker without scruple, till his own was full again. But the poor gentleman—the downfallen man of rank—the degraded man of birth—the disabled and disarmed man of power—it is he that is to be pitied, who loses not merely drink and dinner, but honour, situation, credit, character, and name itself!'

'You are declaiming in this manner in order to terrify me,' said Clara; 'but, friend John, I know you and your ways, and I have made up my mind upon all contingencies that can take place. I will tell you more—I have stood on this tottering pinnacle of rank and fashion, if our situation can be termed such, till my head is dizzy with the instability of my eminence; and I feel that strange desire of tossing myself down which the devil is said to put into folks' heads when they stand on the top of steeples—at least, I had rather the plunge were over.'

'Be satisfied, then, if that will satisfy you; the plunge is over, and we are—what they used to call it in Scotland—gentle beggars—creatures to whom our second, and third, and fourth, and fifth cousins may, if they please, give a place at the side-table, and a seat in the carriage with the lady's-maid, if driving backwards will not make us sick.'

'They may give it to those who will take it,' said Clara;

'but I am determined to eat bread of my own buying : I can do twenty things, and I am sure some one or other of them will bring me all the little money I will need. I have been trying, John, for several months, how little I can live upon, and you would laugh if you heard how low I have brought the account.'

'There is a difference, Clara, between fanciful experiments and real poverty : the one is a masquerade, which we can end when we please, the other is wretchedness for life.'

'Methinks, brother,' replied Miss Mowbray, 'it would be better for you to set me an example how to carry my good resolutions into effect than to ridicule them.'

'Why, what would you have me do?' said he, fiercely — 'turn postilion, or rough-rider, or whipper-in? I don't know anything else that my education, as I have used it, has fitted me for; and then some of my old acquaintances would, I daresay, give me a crown to drink now and then for old acquaintance' sake.'

'This is not the way, John, that men of sense think or speak of serious misfortunes,' answered his sister; 'and I do not believe that this is so serious as it is your pleasure to make it.'

'Believe the very worst you can think,' replied he, 'and you will not believe bad enough! You have neither a guinea, nor a house, nor a friend; pass but a day, and it is a chance that you will not have a brother.'

'My dear John, you have drunk hard — rode hard.'

'Yes; such tidings deserved to be carried express, especially to a young lady who receives them so well,' answered Mowbray, bitterly. 'I suppose, now, it will make no impression, if I were to tell you that you have it in your power to stop all this ruin?'

'By consummating my own, I suppose? Brother, I said you could not make me tremble, but you have found a way to do it.'

'What, you expect I am again to urge you with Lord Metherington's courtship! That *might* have saved all, indeed; but that day of grace is over.'

'I am glad of it, with all my spirit,' said Clara; 'may it take with it all that we can quarrel about! But till this instant I thought it was for this very point that this long voyage was bound, and that you were endeavouring to persuade me of the reality of the danger of the storm, in order to reconcile me to the harbour.'

'You are mad, I think, in earnest,' said Mowbray. 'Can you

really be so absurd as to rejoice that you have no way left to relieve yourself and me from ruin, want, and shame?’

‘From shame, brother?’ said Clara. ‘No shame in honest poverty, I hope.’

‘That is according as folks have used their prosperity, Clara. I must speak to the point. There are strange reports going below. By Heaven! they are enough to disturb the ashes of the dead! Were I to mention them, I should expect our poor mother to enter the room. Clara Mowbray, can you guess what I mean?’

It was with the utmost exertion, yet in a faltering voice, that she was able, after an ineffectual effort, to utter the monosyllable, ‘No!’

‘By Heaven! I am ashamed — I am even *afraid* to express my own meaning! Clara, what is there which makes you so obstinately reject every proposal of marriage? Is it that you feel yourself unworthy to be the wife of an honest man? Speak out! Evil fame has been busy with your reputation. Speak out! Give me the right to cram their lies down the throats of the inventors, and when I go among them to-morrow I shall know how to treat those who cast reflections on you! The fortunes of our house are ruined, but no tongue shall slander its honour. Speak — speak, wretched girl! Why are you silent?’

‘Stay at home, brother!’ said Clara — ‘stay at home, if you regard our house’s honour; murder cannot mend misery. Stay at home, and let them talk of me as they will, they can scarcely say worse of me than I deserve!’

The passions of Mowbray, at all times ungovernably strong, were at present inflamed by wine, by his rapid journey, and the previously disturbed state of his mind. He set his teeth, clenched his hands, looked on the ground, as one that forms some horrid resolution, and muttered almost unintelligibly, ‘It were charity to kill her!’

‘Oh! no — no — no!’ exclaimed the terrified girl, throwing herself at his feet. ‘Do not kill me, brother! I have wished for death — thought of death — prayed for death; but, oh! it is frightful to think that he is near. Oh! not a bloody death, brother, nor by your hand!’

She held him close by the knees as she spoke, and expressed, in her looks and accents, the utmost terror. It was not, indeed, without reason; for the extreme solitude of the place, the violent and inflamed passions of her brother, and the desperate circumstances to which he had reduced himself, seemed all to

concur to render some horrid act of violence not an improbable termination of this strange interview.

Mowbray folded his arms, without unclenching his hands or raising his head, while his sister continued on the floor, clasping him round the knees with all her strength, and begging piteously for her life and for mercy.

'Fool!' he said, at last, 'let me go! Who cares for thy worthless life? who cares if thou live or die? Live, if thou canst, and be the hate and scorn of every one else, as much as thou art mine!'

He grasped her by the shoulder, with one hand pushed her from him, and, as she arose from the floor and again pressed to throw her arms around his neck, he repulsed her with his arm and hand, with a push, or blow, it might be termed either one or the other, violent enough, in her weak state, to have again extended her on the ground, had not a chair received her as she fell. He looked at her with ferocity, grappled a moment in his pocket; then ran to the window, and throwing the sash violently up, thrust himself as far as he could without falling into the open air.

Terrified, and yet her feelings of his unkindness predominating even above her fears, Clara continued to exclaim — 'Oh, brother, say you did not mean this! Oh, say you did not mean to strike me! Oh, whatever I have deserved, be not you the executioner! It is not manly — it is not natural: there are but two of us in the world!'

He returned no answer; and, observing that he continued to stretch himself from the window, which was in the second story of the building, and overlooked the court, a new cause of apprehension mingled, in some measure, with her personal fears. Timidly, and with streaming eyes and uplifted hands, she approached her angry brother, and fearfully, yet firmly, seized the skirt of his coat, as if anxious to preserve him from the effects of that despair which so lately seemed turned against her, and now against himself.

He felt the pressure of her hold, and drawing himself angrily back, asked her sternly what she wanted.

'Nothing,' she said, quitting her hold of his coat; 'but what — what did he look after so anxiously?'

'After the devil!' he answered, fiercely; then drawing in his head, and taking her hand, 'By my soul, Clara, it is true, if ever there was truth in such a tale! He stood by me just now, and urged me to murder thee! What else could have

put my hunting-knife into my thought—ay, by God, and into my very hand—at such a moment? Yonder I could almost fancy I see him fly, the wood, and the rock, and the water gleaming back the dark-red furnace-light that is shed on them by his dragon wings! By my soul, I can hardly suppose it fancy—I can hardly think but that I was under the influence of an evil spirit—under an act of fiendish possession! But gone as he is, gone let him be—and thou, too ready implement of evil, be thou gone after him!’ He drew from his pocket his right hand, which had all this time held his hunting-knife, and threw the implement into the courtyard as he spoke; then, with a sad quietness and solemnity of manner, shut the window, and led his sister by the hand to her usual seat, which her tottering steps scarce enabled her to reach. ‘Clara,’ he said, after a pause of mournful silence, ‘we must think what is to be done, without passion or violence; there may be something for us in the dice yet, if we do not throw away our game. A blot is never a blot till it is hit: dishonour concealed is not dishonour in some respects. Dost thou attend to me, wretched girl?’ he said, suddenly and sternly raising his voice.

‘Yes, brother—yes, indeed, brother!’ she hastily replied, terrified even by delay again to awaken his ferocious and ungovernable temper.

‘Thus it must be, then,’ he said. ‘You must marry this Etherington; there is no help for it, Clara. You cannot complain of what your own vice and folly have rendered inevitable.’

‘But, brother!’ said the trembling girl.

‘Be silent. I know all that you would say. You love him not, you would say. I love him not, no more than you. Nay, what is more, he loves you not; if he did, I might scruple to give you to him, you being such as you have owned yourself. But you shall wed him out of hate, Clara, or for the interest of your family, or for what reason you will. But wed him you shall and must.’

‘Brother—dearest brother—one single word!’

‘Not of refusal or expostulation—that time is gone by,’ said her stern censor. ‘When I believed thee what I thought thee this morning, I might advise you, but I could not compel. But, since the honour of our family has been disgraced by your means, it is but just that, if possible, its disgrace should be hidden; and it shall—ay, if selling you for a slave would tend to conceal it!’

'You do worse — you do worse by me! A slave in an open market may be bought by a kind master; you do not give me that chance — you wed me to one who ——'

'Fear him not, nor the worst that he can do, Clara,' said her brother. 'I know on what terms he marries; and being once more your brother, as your obedience in this matter will make me, he had better tear his flesh from his bones with his own teeth than do thee any displeasure! By Heaven, I hate him so much, for he has outreached me every way, that methinks it is some consolation that he will not receive in thee the excellent creature I thought thee! Fallen as thou art, thou art still too good for him.'

Encouraged by the more gentle and almost affectionate tone in which her brother spoke, Clara could not help saying, although almost in a whisper, 'I trust it will not be so: I trust he will consider his own condition, honour, and happiness better than to share it with me.'

'Let him utter such a scruple if he dares,' said Mowbray. 'But he dares not hesitate: he knows that the instant he recedes from addressing you he signs his own death-warrant or mine, or perhaps that of both; and his views, too, are of a kind that will not be relinquished on a point of scrupulous delicacy merely. Therefore, Clara, nourish no such thought in your heart as that there is the least possibility of your escaping this marriage! The match is booked. Swear you will not hesitate.'

'I will not,' she said, almost breathlessly, terrified lest he was about to start once more into the fit of unbridled fury which had before seized on him.

'Do not even whisper or hint an objection, but submit to your fate, for it is inevitable.'

'I will — submit,' answered Clara, in the same trembling accent.

'And I,' he said, 'will spare you — at least at present, and it may be for ever — all inquiry into the guilt which you have confessed. Rumours there were of misconduct, which reached my ears even in England; but who could have believed them that looked on you daily, and witnessed your late course of life? On this subject I will be at present silent — perhaps may not again touch on it — that is, if you do nothing to thwart my pleasure, or to avoid the fate which circumstances render unavoidable. And now it is late; retire, Clara, to your bed; think on what I have said as what necessity has determined, and not my selfish pleasure.'

He held out his hand, and she placed, but not without reluctant terror, her trembling palm in his. In this manner, and with a sort of mournful solemnity, as if they had been in attendance upon a funeral, he handed his sister through a gallery hung with old family pictures, at the end of which was Clara's bedchamber. The moon, which at this moment looked out through a huge volume of mustering clouds that had long been boding storm, fell on the two last descendants of that ancient family, as they glided hand in hand, more like the ghosts of the deceased than like living persons, through the hall and amongst the portraits of their forefathers. The same thoughts were in the breast of both, but neither attempted to say, while they cast a flitting glance on the pallid and decayed representations, 'How little did these anticipate this catastrophe of their house!' At the door of the bedroom Mowbray quitted his sister's hand, and said, 'Clara, you should to-night thank God, that saved you from a great danger and me from a deadly sin.'

'I will,' she answered — 'I will.' And, as if her terror had been anew excited by this allusion to what had passed, she bid her brother hastily good-night, and was no sooner within her apartment than he heard her turn the key in the lock and draw two bolts besides.

'I understand you, Clara,' muttered Mowbray between his teeth, as he heard one bar drawn after another. 'But if you could earth yourself under Ben Nevis, you could not escape what fate has destined for you. Yes!' he said to himself, as he walked with slow and moody pace through the moonlight gallery, uncertain whether to return to the parlour or to retire to his solitary chamber, when his attention was roused by a noise in the courtyard.

The night was not indeed very far advanced, but it had been so long since Shaws Castle received a guest, that, had Mowbray not heard the rolling of wheels in the courtyard, he might have thought rather of housebreakers than of visitors. But, as the sound of a carriage and horses was distinctly heard, it instantly occurred to him that the guest must be Lord Etherington, come, even at this late hour, to speak with him on the reports which were current to his sister's prejudice, and perhaps to declare his addresses to her were at an end. Eager to know the worst, and to bring matters to a decision, he re-entered the apartment he had just left, where the lights were still burning, and calling loudly to Patrick, whom he

heard in communing with the postilion, commanded him to show the visitor to Miss Mowbray's parlour. It was not the light step of the young nobleman which came tramping, or rather stamping, through the long passage, and up the two or three steps at the end of it. Neither was it Lord Etherington's graceful figure which was seen when the door opened, but the stout, square substance of Mr. Peregrine Touchwood.

CHAPTER XXXVI

A Relative

Claim'd kindred there, and had his claims allow'd.

Deserted Village.

STARTING at the unexpected and undesired apparition which presented itself, in the manner described at the end of the last chapter, Mowbray yet felt, at the same time, a kind of relief that his meeting with Lord Etherington, painfully decisive as that meeting must be, was for a time suspended. So it was with a mixture of peevishness and internal satisfaction that he demanded what had procured him the honour of a visit from Mr. Touchwood at this late hour.

'Necessity, that makes the old wife trot,' replied Touchwood; 'no choice of mine, I assure you. Gad, Mr. Mowbray, I would rather have crossed St. Gothard than run the risk I have done to-night, rumbling through your breakneck roads in that d—d old wheelbarrow. On my word, I believe I must be troublesome to your butler for a draught of something: I am as thirsty as a coal-heaver that is working by the piece. You have porter, I suppose, or good old Scotch twopenny?'

With a secret execration on his visitor's effrontery, Mr. Mowbray ordered the servant to put down wine and water, of which Touchwood mixed a gobletful and drank it off.

'We are a small family,' said his entertainer, 'and I am seldom at home, still more seldom receive guests when I chance to be here—I am sorry I have no malt liquor, if you prefer it.'

'Prefer it!' said Touchwood, compounding, however, another glass of sherry and water, and adding a large piece of sugar to correct the hoarseness which, he observed, his night journey might bring on; 'to be sure I prefer it, and so does everybody, except Frenchmen and dandies. No offence, Mr. Mowbray, but you should order a hogshead from Meux: the brown stout,

wired down for exportation to the colonies, keeps for any length of time, and in every climate. I have drank it where it must have cost a guinea a quart, if interest had been counted.'

'When I *expect* the honour of a visit from you, Mr. Touchwood, I will endeavour to be better provided,' answered Mowbray; 'at present your arrival has been without notice, and I would be glad to know if it has any particular object.'

'This is what I call coming to the point,' said Mr. Touchwood, thrusting out his stout legs, accoutred as they were with the ancient defences called boot-hose, so as to rest his heels upon the fender. 'Upon my life, the fire turns the best flower in the garden at this season of the year; I'll take the freedom to throw on a log. Is it not a strange thing, by the by, that one never sees a fagot in Scotland? You have much small wood, Mr. Mowbray, I wonder you do not get some fellow from the midland counties to teach your people how to make a fagot.'

'Did you come all the way to Shaws Castle,' asked Mowbray, rather testily, 'to instruct me in the mystery of fagot-making?'

'Not exactly — not exactly,' answered the undaunted Touchwood; 'but there is a right and a wrong way in everything; a word by the way, on any useful subject, can never fall amiss. As for my immediate and more pressing business, I can assure you that it is of a nature sufficiently urgent, since it brings me to a house in which I am much surprised to find myself.'

'The surprise is mutual, sir,' said Mowbray, gravely, observing that his guest made a pause; 'it is full time you should explain it.'

'Well, then,' replied Touchwood, 'I must first ask you whether you have never heard of a certain old gentleman, called Scrogie, who took it into what he called his head, poor man, to be ashamed of the name he bore, though owned by many honest and respectable men, and chose to join it to your surname of Mowbray, as having a more chivalrous Norman sounding, and, in a word, a gentlemanlike twang with it?'

'I have heard of such a person, though only lately,' said Mowbray. 'Reginald Scrogie Mowbray was his name. I have reason to consider his alliance with my family as undoubted, though you seem to mention it with a sneer, sir. I believe Mr. S. Mowbray regulated his family settlements very much upon the idea that his heir was to intermarry with our house.'

'True — true, Mr. Mowbray,' answered Touchwood; 'and

certainly it is not your business to lay the axe to the root of the genealogical tree that is like to bear golden apples for you — ha !'

'Well — well, sir, proceed — proceed,' answered Mowbray.

'You may also have heard that this old gentleman had a son who would willingly have cut up the said family tree into fagots, who thought Scrogie sounded as well as Mowbray, and had no fancy for an imaginary gentility, which was to be attained by the change of one's natural name, and the disowning, as it were, of one's actual relations.'

'I think I have heard from Lord Etherington,' answered Mowbray, 'to whose communications I owe most of my knowledge about these Scrogie people, that old Mr. Scrogie Mowbray was unfortunate in a son who thwarted his father on every occasion, would embrace no opportunity which fortunate chances held out of raising and distinguishing the family, had imbibed low tastes, wandering habits, and singular objects of pursuit, on account of which his father disinherited him.'

'It is very true, Mr. Mowbray,' proceeded Touchwood, 'that this person did happen to fall under his father's displeasure because he scorned forms and flummery, loved better to make money as an honest merchant than to throw it away as an idle gentleman, never called a coach when walking on foot would serve the turn, and liked the Royal Exchange better than St. James's Park. In short, his father disinherited him because he had the qualities for doubling the estate rather than those for squandering it.'

'All this may be quite correct, Mr. Touchwood,' replied Mowbray; 'but pray, what has this Mr. Scrogie, junior, to do with you or me?'

'Do with you or me !' said Touchwood, as if surprised at the question; 'he has a great deal to do with me at least, since I am the very man myself.'

'The devil you are !' said Mowbray, opening wide his eyes in turn. 'Why, Mr. A — a — your name is Touchwood — P. Touchwood — Paul, I suppose, or Peter — I read it so in the subscription-book at the Well.'

'Peregrine, sir, Peregrine; my mother would have me so christened, because *Peregrine Pickle* came out during her confinement; and my poor foolish father acquiesced, because he thought it genteel, and derived from the Willoughbys. I don't like it, and I always write "P." short, and you might have remarked an "S." also before the surname: I use at present

"P. S. Touchwood." I had an old acquaintance in the city who loved his jest — he always called me Postscript Touchwood.'

'Then, sir,' said Mowbray, 'if you are really Mr. Scrogie, *tout court*, I must suppose the name of Touchwood is assumed?'

'What the devil!' replied Mr. P. S. Touchwood; 'do you suppose there is no name in the English nation will couple up legitimately with my paternal name of Scrogie except your own, Mr. Mowbray? I assure you I got the name of Touchwood, and a pretty spell of money along with it, from an old godfather, who admired my spirit in sticking by commerce.'

'Well, sir, every one has his taste. Many would have thought it better to enjoy a hereditary estate by keeping your father's name of Mowbray than to have gained another by assuming a stranger's name of Touchwood.'

'Who told you Mr. Touchwood was a stranger to me?' said the traveller; 'for aught I know, he had a better title to the duties of a son from me than the poor old man who made such a fool of himself by trying to turn gentleman in his old age. He was my grandfather's partner in the great firm of Touchwood, Scrogie, & Co. Let me tell you, there is as good inheritance in house as in field: a man's partners are his fathers and brothers, and a head clerk may be likened to a kind of first cousin.'

'I meant no offence whatever, Mr. Touchwood Scrogie.'

'Scrogie Touchwood, if you please,' said the senior; 'the scrog branch first, for it must become rotten ere it become touchwood — ha, ha, ha! — you take me?'

'A singular old fellow this,' said Mowbray to himself, 'and speaks in all the dignity of dollars; but I will be civil to him till I can see what he is driving at. You are facetious, Mr. Touchwood,' he proceeded aloud. 'I was only going to say, that although you set no value upon your connexion with my family, yet I cannot forget that such a circumstance exists; and therefore I bid you heartily welcome to Shaws Castle.'

'Thank ye — thank ye, Mr. Mowbray; I knew you would see the thing right. To tell you the truth, I should not have cared much to come a-begging for your acquaintance and cousinship, and so forth, but that I thought you would be more tractable in your adversity than was your father in his prosperity.'

'Did you know my father, sir?' said Mowbray.

'Ay — ay, I came once down here and was introduced to him, saw your sister and you when you were children, had thoughts of making my will then, and should have clapped you

both in before I set out to double Cape Horn. But, gad, I wish my poor father had seen the reception I got! I did not let the old gentleman, Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's that was then, smoke my money-bags — that might have made him more tractable; not but that we went on indifferent well for a day or two, till I got a hint that my room was wanted, for that the Duke of Devil-knows-what was expected, and my bed was to serve his *valet-de-chambre*. "Oh, damn all gentle cousins!" said I, and off I set on the pad round the world again, and thought no more of the Mowbrays till a year or so ago.'

'And pray what recalled us to your recollection?'

'Why,' said Touchwood, 'I was settled for some time at Smyrna — for I turn the penny go where I will, I have done a little business even since I came here — but being at Smyrna as I said, I became acquainted with Francis Tyrrel.'

'The natural brother of Lord Etherington,' said Mowbray.

'Ay, so called,' answered Touchwood; 'but by and by he is more likely to prove the Earl of Etherington himself, and t'other fine fellow the bastard.'

'The devil he is! You surprise me, Mr. Touchwood.'

'I thought I should — I thought I should. Faith, I am sometimes surprised myself at the turn things take in this world. But the thing is not the less certain: the proofs are lying in the strong chest of our house at London, deposited there by the old earl, who repented of his roguery to Miss Martigny long before he died, but had not courage enough to do his legitimate son justice till the sexton had housed him.'

'Good Heaven, sir!' said Mowbray; 'and did you know all this while that I was about to bestow the only sister of my house upon an impostor?'

'What was my business with that, Mr. Mowbray?' replied Touchwood; 'you would have been very angry had any one suspected you of not being sharp enough to look out for yourself and your sister both. Besides, Lord Etherington, bad enough as he may be in other respects, was, till very lately, no impostor, or an innocent one, for he only-occupied the situation in which his father had placed him. And, indeed, when I understood, upon coming to England, that he was gone down here, and, as I conjectured, to pay his addresses to your sister, to say truth, I did not see he could do better. Here was a poor fellow that was about to cease to be a lord and a wealthy man — was it not very reasonable that he should make the most of his dignity while he had it? and if, by marrying a pretty

girl while in possession of his title, he could get possession of the good estate of Nettlewood, why, I could see nothing in it but a very pretty way of breaking his fall.'

'Very pretty for him, indeed, and very convenient, too,' said Mowbray; 'but pray, sir, what was to become of the honour of my family?'

'Why, what was the honour of your family to me?' said Touchwood; 'unless it was to recommend your family to my care that I was disinherited on account of it. And if this Etherington, or Bulmer, had been a good fellow, I would have seen all the Mowbrays that ever wore broadcloth at Jericho before I had interfered.'

'I am really much indebted to your kindness,' said Mowbray, angrily.

'More than you are aware of,' answered Touchwood; 'for, though I thought this Bulmer, even when declared illegitimate, might be a reasonable good match for your sister, considering the estate which was to accompany the union of their hands, yet, now I have discovered him to be a scoundrel — every way a scoundrel — I would not wish any decent girl to marry him, were they to get all Yorkshire, instead of Nettlewood. So I have come to put you right.'

The strangeness of the news which Touchwood so bluntly communicated made Mowbray's head turn round like that of a man who grows dizzy at finding himself on the verge of a precipice. Touchwood observed his consternation, which he willingly construed into an acknowledgment of his own brilliant genius.

'Take a glass of wine, Mr. Mowbray,' he said, complacently — 'take a glass of old sherry, nothing like it for clearing the ideas; and do not be afraid of me, though I come thus suddenly upon you with such surprising tidings: you will find me a plain, simple, ordinary man, that have my faults and my blunders like other people. I acknowledge that much travel and experience have made me sometimes play the busybody, because I find I can do things better than other people, and I love to see folk stare — it's a way I have got. But, after all, I am *un bon diable*, as the Frenchman says; and here I have come four or five hundred miles to lie quiet among you all, and put all your little matters to rights, just when you think they are most desperate.'

'I thank you for your good intentions,' said Mowbray; 'but I must needs say that they would have been more effectual had

you been less cunning in my behalf, and frankly told me what you knew of Lord Etherington; as it is, the matter has gone fearfully far. I have promised him my sister; I have laid myself under personal obligations to him; and there are other reasons why I fear I must keep my word to this man, earl or no earl.'

'What!' exclaimed Touchwood, 'would you give up your sister to a worthless rascal, who is capable of robbing the post-office and of murdering his brother, because you have lost a trifle of money to him? Are you to let him go off triumphantly because he is a gamester as well as a cheat? You are a pretty fellow, Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's; you are one of the happy sheep that go out for wool and come home shorn. Egad, you think yourself a millstone, and turn out a sack of grain. You flew abroad a hawk, and have come home a pigeon. You snarled at the Philistines, and they have drawn your eye-teeth with a vengeance!'

'This is all very witty, Mr. Touchwood,' replied Mowbray; 'but wit will not pay this man Etherington, or whatever he is, so many hundreds as I have lost to him.'

'Why, then, wealth must do what wit cannot,' said old Touchwood; 'I must advance for you, that is all. Look ye, sir, I do not go afoot for nothing: if I have laboured, I have reaped, and, like the fellow in the old play, "I have enough, and can maintain my humour." It is not a few hundreds, or thousands either, can stand betwixt old P. S. Touchwood and his purpose; and my present purpose is to make you, Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's, a free man of the forest. You still look grave on it, young man? Why, I trust you are not such an ass as to think your dignity offended because the plebeian Scrogie comes to the assistance of the terribly great and old house of Mowbray?'

'I am indeed not such a fool,' answered Mowbray, with his eyes still bent on the ground, 'to reject assistance that comes to me like a rope to a drowning man; but there is a circumstance——' he stopped short and drank a glass of wine—'a circumstance to which it is most painful to me to allude; but you seem my friend, and I cannot intimate to you more strongly my belief in your professions of regard than by saying, that the language held by Lady Penelope Penfeather on my sister's account renders it highly proper that she were settled in life; and I cannot but fear that the breaking off the affair with this man might be of great prejudice to her at this moment. They

will have Nettlewood, and they may live separate; he has offered to make settlements to that effect, even on the very day of marriage. Her condition as a married woman will put her above scandal, and above necessity, from which, I am sorry to say, I cannot hope long to preserve her.'

'For shame! — for shame! — for shame!' said Touchwood, accumulating his words thicker than usual on each other; 'would you sell your own flesh and blood to a man like this Bulmer, whose character is now laid before you, merely because a disappointed old maid speaks scandal of her? A fine veneration you pay to the honoured name of Mowbray! If my poor, old, simple father had known what the owners of these two grand syllables could have stooped to do for merely ensuring subsistence, he would have thought as little of the noble Mowbrays as of the humble Scrogies. And, I daresay, the young lady is just such another — eager to get married, no matter to whom.'

'Excuse me, Mr. Touchwood,' answered Mowbray; 'my sister entertains sentiments so very different from what you ascribe to her, that she and I parted on the most unpleasant terms, in consequence of my pressing this man's suit upon her. God knows, that I only did so because I saw no other outlet from this most unpleasant dilemma. But, since you are willing to interfere, sir, and aid me to disentangle these complicated matters, which have, I own, been made worse by my own rashness, I am ready to throw the matter completely into your hands, just as if you were my father arisen from the dead. Nevertheless, I must needs express my surprise at the extent of your intelligence in these affairs.'

'You speak very sensibly, young man,' said the traveller; 'and as for my intelligence, I have for some time known the finesses of this Master Bulmer as perfectly as if I had been at his elbow when he was playing all his dog's tricks with this family. You would hardly suspect now,' he continued, in a confidential tone, 'that what you were so desirous a while ago should take place has in some sense actually happened, and that the marriage ceremony has really passed betwixt your sister and this pretended Lord Etherington?'

'Have a care, sir!' said Mowbray, fiercely; 'do not abuse my candour; this is no place, time, or subject for impertinent jesting.'

'As I live by bread, I am serious,' said Touchwood. 'Mr. Cargill performed the ceremony, and there are two living wit-

nesses who heard them say the words, "I, Clara, take you, Francis," or whatever the Scottish church puts in place of that mystical formula.'

'It is impossible,' said Mowbray: 'Cargill dared not have done such a thing; a clandestine proceeding such as you speak of would have cost him his living. I'll bet my soul against a horseshoe, it is all an imposition; and you come to disturb me, sir, amid my family distress, with legends that have no more truth in them than the Alkoran.'

'There are some true things in the Alkoran — or rather, the Koran, for the Al is merely the article prefixed; but let that pass, I will raise your wonder higher before I am done. It is very true that your sister was indeed joined in marriage with this same Bulmer, that calls himself by the title of Etherington; but it is just as true that the marriage is not worth a maravedi, for she believed him at the time to be another person — to be, in a word, Francis Tyrrel, who is actually what the other pretends to be, a nobleman of fortune.'

'I cannot understand one word of all this,' said Mowbray. 'I must to my sister instantly, and demand of her if there be any real foundation for these wonderful averments.'

'Do not go,' said Touchwood, detaining him, 'you shall have a full explanation from me; and to comfort you under your perplexity, I can assure you that Cargill's consent to celebrate the nuptials was only obtained by an aspersion thrown on your sister's character, which induced him to believe that speedy marriage would be the sole means of saving her reputation; and I am convinced in my own mind it is only the revival of this report which has furnished the foundation of Lady Penelope's chattering.'

'If I could think so,' said Mowbray — 'if I could but think this is truth — and it seems to explain, in some degree, my sister's mysterious conduct — if I could but think it true, I should fall down and worship you as an angel from heaven!'

'A proper sort of angel,' said Touchwood, looking modestly down on his short, sturdy supporters. 'Did you ever hear of an angel in boot-hose? Or, do you suppose angels are sent to wait on broken-down horse-jockeys?'

'Call me what you will, Mr. Touchwood,' said the young man, 'only make out your story true, and my sister innocent!'

'Very well spoken, sir,' answered the senior — 'very well spoken! But then I understand you are to be guided by my prudence and experience? None of your "G—damme" doings,

sir — your duels or your drubbings. Let *me* manage the affair for you, and I will bring you through with a flowing sail.'

'Sir, I must feel as a gentleman,' said Mowbray.

'Feel as a fool,' said Touchwood, 'for that is the true case. Nothing would please this Bulmer better than to fight through his rogueries : he knows very well that he who can slit a pistol-ball on the edge of a penknife will always preserve some sort of reputation amidst his scoundrelism ; but I shall take care to stop that hole. Sit down ; be a man of sense, and listen to the whole of this strange story.'

Mowbray sat down accordingly ; and Touchwood, in his own way, and with many characteristic interjectional remarks, gave him an account of the early loves of Clara and Tyrrel ; of the reasons which induced Bulmer at first to encourage their correspondence, in hopes that his brother would, by a clandestine marriage, altogether ruin himself with his father ; of the change which took place in his views when he perceived the importance annexed by the old earl to the union of Miss Mowbray with his apparent heir ; of the desperate stratagem which he endeavoured to play off, by substituting himself in the room of his brother ; and all the consequences, which it is unnecessary to resume here, as they are detailed at length by the perpetrator himself, in his correspondence with Captain Jekyl.

When the whole communication was ended, Mowbray, almost stupified by the wonders he had heard, remained for some time in a sort of reverie, from which he only started to ask what evidence could be produced of a story so strange.

'The evidence,' answered Touchwood, 'of one who was a deep agent in all these matters from first to last — as complete a rogue, I believe, as the devil himself, with this difference, that our mortal fiend does not, I believe, do evil for the sake of evil, but for the sake of the profit which attends it. How far this plea will avail him in a court of conscience, I cannot tell ; but his disposition was so far akin to humanity, that I have always found my old acquaintance as ready to do good as harm, providing he had the same *agio* upon the transaction.'

'On my soul,' said Mowbray, 'you must mean Solmes, whom I have long suspected to be a deep villain, and now he proves traitor to boot ! How the devil could you get into his intimacy, Mr. Touchwood ?'

'The case was particular,' said Touchwood. 'Mr. Solmes, too active a member of the community to be satisfied with managing the affairs which his master entrusted to him, ad-

ventured in a little business on his own account ; and thinking, I suppose, that the late Earl of Etherington had forgotten fully to acknowledge his services as valet to his son, he supplied that defect by a small check on our house for £100, in name, and bearing the apparent signature, of the deceased. This small mistake being detected, Mr. Solmes, *porteur* of the little billet, would have been consigned to the custody of a Bow Street officer, but that I found means to relieve him, on condition of his making known to me the points of private history which I have just been communicating to you. What I had known of Tyrrel at Smyrna had given me much interest in him, and you may guess it was not lessened by the distresses which he had sustained through his brother's treachery. By this fellow's means I have counterplotted all his master's fine schemes. For example, as soon as I learned Bulmer was coming down here, I contrived to give Tyrrel an anonymous hint, well knowing he would set off like the devil to thwart him, and so I should have the whole *dramatis personæ* together, and play them all off against each other, after my own pleasure.'

'In that case,' said Mr. Mowbray, 'your expedient brought about the rencontre between the two brothers, when both might have fallen.'

'Can't deny it—can't deny it,' answered Scrogie, a little discountenanced ; 'a mere accident—no one can guard every point. Egad, but I had like to have been baffled again, for Bulmer sent the lad Jekyl, who is not such a black sheep neither but what there are some white hairs about him, upon a treaty with Tyrrel, that my secret agent was not admitted to. Gad, but I discovered the whole—you will scarce guess how.'

'Probably not easily, indeed, sir,' answered Mowbray ; 'for your sources of intelligence are not the most obvious, any more than your mode of acting the most simple or most comprehensible.'

'I would not have it so,' said Touchwood : 'simple men perish in their simplicity, I carry my eye-teeth about me. And for my source of information—why, I played the eaves-dropper, sir—listened—knew my landlady's cupboard with the double door—got into it as she has done many a time. Such a fine gentleman as you would rather cut a man's throat, I suppose, than listen at a cupboard door, though the object were to prevent murder?'

'I cannot say I should have thought of the expedient, certainly, sir,' said Mowbray.

'I did, though,' said Scrogie, 'and learned enough of what was going on to give Jekyl a hint that sickened him of his commission, I believe; so the game is all in my own hands. Bulmer has no one to trust to but Solmes, and Solmes tells me everything.'

Here Mowbray could not suppress a movement of impatience.

'I wish to God, sir, that since you were so kind as to interest yourself in affairs so intimately concerning my family, you had been pleased to act with a little more openness towards me. Here have I been for weeks the intimate of a damned scoundrel, whose throat I ought to have cut for his scandalous conduct to my sister. Here have I been rendering her and myself miserable, and getting myself cheated every night by a swindler, whom you, if it had been your pleasure, could have unmasked by a single word. I do all justice to your intentions, sir; but, upon my soul, I cannot help wishing you had conducted yourself with more frankness and less mystery; and I am truly afraid your love of dexterity has been too much for your ingenuity, and that you have suffered matters to run into such a skein of confusion as you yourself will find difficulty in unravelling.'

Touchwood smiled, and shook his head in all the conscious pride of superior understanding. 'Young man,' he said, 'when you have seen a little of the world, and especially beyond the bounds of this narrow island, you will find much more art and dexterity necessary in conducting these businesses to an issue than occurs to a blind John Bull or a raw Scotchman. You will be then no stranger to the policy of life, which deals in mining and countermining — now in making feints, now in thrusting with forthright passes. I look upon you, Mr. Mowbray, as a young man spoiled by staying at home and keeping bad company; and will make it my business, if you submit yourself to my guidance, to inform your understanding, so as to retrieve your estate. Don't — don't answer me, sir! because I know too well, by experience, how young men answer on these subjects; they are conceited, sir, as conceited as if they had been in all the four quarters of the world. I hate to be answered, sir — I hate it. And, to tell you the truth, it is because Tyrrel has a fancy of answering me that I rather make you my confidant on this occasion than him. I would have had him throw himself into my arms, and under my directions; but he hesitated — he hesitated, Mr. Mowbray — and I despise hesitation. If he thinks he has wit enough to manage his own matters, let

him try it — let him try it. Not but I will do all that I can for him, in fitting time and place ; but I will let him dwell in his perplexities and uncertainties for a little while longer. And so, Mr. Mowbray, you see what sort of an odd fellow I am, and you can satisfy me at once whether you mean to come into my measures ; only speak out at once, sir, for I abhor hesitation.'

While Touchwood thus spoke, Mowbray was forming his resolution internally. He was not so inexperienced as the senior supposed ; at least, he could plainly see that he had to do with an obstinate, capricious old man, who, with the best intentions in the world, chose to have everything in his own way ; and, like most petty politicians, was disposed to throw intrigue and mystery over matters which had much better be prosecuted boldly and openly. But he perceived at the same time that Touchwood, as a sort of relation, wealthy, childless, and disposed to become his friend, was a person to be conciliated, the rather that the traveller himself had frankly owned that it was Francis Tyrrel's want of deference towards him which had forfeited, or at least abated, his favour. Mowbray recollected, also, that the circumstances under which he himself stood did not permit him to trifle with returning gleams of good fortune. Subduing, therefore, the haughtiness of temper proper to him as an only son and heir, he answered respectfully, that, in his condition, the advice and assistance of Mr. Scrogie Touchwood were too important not to be purchased at the price of submitting his own judgment to that of an experienced and sagacious friend.

'Well said, Mr. Mowbray,' replied the senior — 'well said. Let me once have the management of your affairs, and we will brush them up for you without loss of time. I must be obliged to you for a bed for the night, however — it is as dark as a wolf's mouth ; and if you will give orders to keep the poor devil of a postilion, and his horses too, why, I will be the more obliged to you.'

Mowbray applied himself to the bell. Patrick answered the call, and was much surprised when the old gentleman, taking the word out of his entertainer's mouth, desired a bed to be got ready, with a little fire in the grate. 'For I take it, friend,' he went on, 'you have not guests here very often. And see that my sheets be not damp ; and bid the housemaid take care not to make the bed upon an exact level, but let it slope from the pillow to the footposts, at a declivity of about eighteen

inches. And hark ye, get me a jug of barley-water, to place by my bedside, with the squeeze of a lemon ; or stay, you will make it as sour as Beelzebub — bring the lemon on a saucer, and I will mix it myself.'

Patrick listened like one of sense forlorn, his head turning like a mandarin alternately from the speaker to his master, as if to ask the latter whether this was all reality. The instant that Touchwood stopped, Mowbray added his fiat.

'Let everything be done to make Mr. Touchwood comfortable, in the way he wishes.'

'Aweel, sir,' said Patrick, 'I shall tell Mally, to be sure, and we maun do our best, and — but it's unco late ——'

'And, therefore,' said Touchwood, 'the sooner we get to bed the better, my old friend. I, for one, must be stirring early : I have business of life and death ; it concerns you too, Mr. Mowbray — but no more of that till to-morrow. And let the lad put up his horses, and get him a bed somewhere.'

Patrick here thought he had gotten upon firm ground for resistance, for which, displeased with the dictatorial manner of the stranger, he felt considerably inclined.

'Ye may catch us at that, if ye can,' said Patrick ; 'there's nae post cattle come into our stables. What do we ken, but that they may be glandered, as the groom says ?'

'We must take the risk to-night, Patrick,' said Mowbray, reluctantly enough ; 'unless Mr. Touchwood will permit the horses to come back early next morning ?'

'Not I, indeed,' said Touchwood ; 'safe bind safe find — it may be once away and aye away, and we shall have enough to do to-morrow morning. Moreover, the poor carrion are tired, and the merciful man is merciful to his beast ; and, in a word, if the horses go back to St. Ronan's Well to-night, I go there for company.'

It often happens, owing, I suppose, to the perversity of human nature, that subserviency in trifles is more difficult to a proud mind than compliance in matters of more importance. Mowbray, like other young gentlemen of his class, was finically rigid in his stable discipline, and even Lord Etherington's horses had not been admitted into that *sanctum sanctorum*, into which he now saw himself obliged to induct two wretched post-hacks. But he submitted with the best grace he could ; and Patrick, while he left their presence, with lifted-up hands and eyes, to execute the orders he had received, could scarcely help thinking that the old man must be the devil in disguise,

since he could thus suddenly control his fiery master, even in the points which he had hitherto seemed to consider as of most vital importance.

‘The Lord in His mercy haud a grip of this puir family ! for I, that was born in it, am like to see the end of it.’ Thus ejaculated Patrick.

CHAPTER XXXVII

The Wanderer

'T is a naughty night to swim in.

King Lear.

THERE was a wild uncertainty about Mowbray's ideas, after he started from a feverish sleep on the morning succeeding this memorable interview, that his sister, whom he really loved as much as he was capable of loving anything, had dishonoured him and her name; and the horrid recollection of their last interview was the first idea which his waking imagination was thrilled with. Then came Touchwood's tale of exculpation; and he persuaded himself, or strove to do so, that Clara must have understood the charge he had brought against her as referring to her attachment to Tyrrel, and its fatal consequences. Again, still he doubted how that could be — still feared that there must be more behind than her reluctance to confess the fraud which had been practised on her by Bulmer; and then, again, he strengthened himself in the first and more pleasing opinion, by recollecting that, averse as she was to espouse the person he 'proposed to her, it must have appeared to her the completion of ruin, if he, Mowbray, should obtain knowledge of the clandestine marriage.

'Yes — O yes,' he said to himself, 'she would think that this story would render me more eager in the rascal's interest, as the best way of hushing up such a discreditable affair; faith, and she would have judged right too, for, had he actually been Lord Etherington, I do not see what else she could have done. But, not being Lord Etherington, and an anointed scoundrel into the bargain, I will content myself with cudgelling him to death so soon as I can get out of the guardianship of this old, meddling, obstinate, self-willed busybody. Then, what is to be done for Clara? This mock marriage was a mere bubble, and both parties must draw stakes. She likes this

grave Don, who proves to be the stick of the right tree after all ; so do not I, though there be something lordlike about him. I was sure a strolling painter could not have carried it off so. She may marry him, I suppose, if the law is not against it ; then she has the earldom, and the Oaklands, and Nettlewood, all at once. Gad, we should come in winners, after all ; and, I dare say, this old boy Touchwood is as rich as a Jew — worth a hundred thousand at least. He is too peremptory to be cut up for sixpence under a hundred thousand. And he talks of putting me to rights ; I must not wince — must stand still to be curried a little. Only, I wish the law may permit Clara's being married to this other earl. A woman cannot marry two brothers, that is certain ; but then, if she is not married to the one of them in good and lawful form, there can be no bar to her marrying the other, I should think. I hope the lawyers will talk no nonsense about it — I hope Clara will have no foolish scruples. But, by my word, the first thing I have to hope is, that the thing is true, for it comes through but a suspicious channel. I'll away to Clara instantly, get the truth out of her, and consider what is to be done.'

Thus partly thought and partly spoke the young laird of St. Ronan's, hastily dressing himself, in order to inquire into the strange chaos of events which perplexed his imagination.

When he came down to the parlour where they had supped last night, and where breakfast was prepared this morning, he sent for a girl who acted as his sister's immediate attendant, and asked, 'If Miss Mowbray was yet stirring ?'

The girl answered, 'She had not rung her bell.'

'It is past her usual hour,' said Mowbray, 'but she was disturbed last night. Go, Martha [Jessy], tell her to get up instantly ; say I have excellent good news for her ; or, if her head aches, I will come and tell them to her before she rises ; go like lightning.'

Martha went, and returned in a minute or two. 'I cannot make my mistress hear, sir, knock as loud as I will. I wish,' she added, with that love of evil presage which is common in the lower ranks, 'that Miss Clara may be well, for I never knew her sleep so sound.'

Mowbray jumped from the chair into which he had thrown himself, ran through the gallery, and knocked smartly at his sister's door. There was no answer. 'Clara — dear Clara ! Answer me but one word — say but you are well. I frightened you last night ; I had been drinking wine — I was violent —

forgive me ! Come, do not be sulky — speak but a single word — say but you are well.'

He made the pauses longer betwixt every branch of his address, knocked sharper and louder, listened more anxiously for an answer ; at length he attempted to open the door, but found it locked, or otherwise secured. 'Does Miss Mowbray always lock her door ?' he asked the girl.

'Never knew her do it before, sir ; she leaves it open that I may call her and open the window-shutters.'

'She had too good reason for precaution last night,' thought her brother, and then remembered having heard her bar the door.

'Come, Clara,' he continued, greatly agitated, 'do not be silly ; if you will not open the door I must force it, that's all ; for how can I tell but that you are sick, and unable to answer ? If you are only sullen, say so. She returns no answer,' he said, turning to the domestic, who was now joined by Touchwood.

Mowbray's anxiety was so great that it prevented his taking any notice of his guest, and he proceeded to say, without regarding his presence, 'What is to be done ? She may be sick — she may be asleep — she may have swooned ; if I force the door, it may terrify her to death in the present weak state of her nerves. Clara — dear Clara ! do but speak a single word, and you shall remain in your own room as long as you please.'

There was no answer. Miss Mowbray's maid, hitherto too much fluttered and alarmed to have much presence of mind, now recollected a back-stair which communicated with her mistress's room from the garden, and suggested she might have gone out that way.

'Gone out,' said Mowbray, in great anxiety, and looking at the heavy fog, or rather small rain, which blotted the November morning — 'gone out, and in weather like this ! But we may get into her room from the back-stair.'

So saying, and leaving his guest to follow or remain as he thought proper, he flew rather than walked to the garden, and found the private door which led into it from the bottom of the back-stair above mentioned was wide open. Full of vague but fearful apprehensions, he rushed up to the door of his sister's apartment, which opened from her dressing-room to the landing-place of the stair ; it was ajar, and that which communicated betwixt the bedroom and dressing-room was half open. 'Clara — Clara !' exclaimed Mowbray, invoking her name

rather in an agony of apprehension than as any longer hoping for a reply. And his apprehension was but too prophetic.

Miss Mowbray was not in that apartment; and, from the order in which it was found, it was plain she had neither undressed on the preceding night nor occupied the bed. Mowbray struck his forehead in an agony of remorse and fear. 'I have terrified her to death,' he said: 'she has fled into the woods, and perished there!'

Under the influence of this apprehension, Mowbray, after another hasty glance around the apartment, as if to assure himself that Clara was not there, rushed again into the dressing-room, almost overturning the traveller, who in civility had not ventured to enter the inner apartment. 'You are as mad as a *hamako*,' said the traveller; 'let us consult together, and I am sure I can contrive ——'

'Oh, d—n your contrivance!' said Mowbray, forgetting all proposed respect in his natural impatience, aggravated by his alarm; 'if you had behaved straightforward and like a man of common sense, this would not have happened!'

'God forgive you, young man, if your reflections are unjust,' said the traveller, quitting the hold he had laid upon Mowbray's coat; 'and God forgive me too, if I have done wrong while endeavouring to do for the best! But may not Miss Mowbray have gone down to the Well? I will order my horses and set off instantly.'

'Do — do,' said Mowbray, recklessly; 'I thank you — I thank you'; and hastily traversing the garden, as if desirous to get rid at once of his visitor and his own thoughts, he took the shortest road to a little postern-gate, which led into the extensive copsewood, through some part of which Clara had caused a walk to be cut to a little summer-house built of rough shingles, covered with creeping shrubs.

As Mowbray hastened through the garden, he met the old man by whom it was kept, a native of the south country, and an old dependant on the family. 'Have you seen my sister?' said Mowbray, hurrying his words on each other with the eagerness of terror.

'What's your wull, St. Ronan's?' answered the old man, at once dull of hearing and slow of apprehension.

'Have you seen Miss Clara?' shouted Mowbray, and muttered an oath or two at the gardener's stupidity.

'In troth have I,' replied the gardener, deliberately. 'What suld ail me to see Miss Clara, St. Ronan's?'

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view, bestowed on it a deep imprecation, and again hurled it from him into the brook. The domestics looked at each other, and recollecting each at the same time that the knife was a favourite tool of their master, who was rather curious in such articles, had little doubt that his mind was affected, in a temporary way at least, by his anxiety on his sister's account. He saw their confused and inquisitive looks, and assuming as much composure and presence of mind as he could command, directed Martha [Jessy] and her female companions to return and search the walks on the other side of Shaws Castle; and, finally, ordered Patrick back to ring the bell, 'which,' he said, assuming a confidence that he was far from entertaining, 'might call Miss Mowbray home from some of her long walks.' He farther desired his groom and horses might meet him at the Clattering Brig, so called from a noisy cascade which was formed by the brook, above which was stretched a small foot-bridge of planks. Having thus shaken off his attendants, he proceeded himself, with all the speed he was capable of exerting, to follow out the path in which he was at present engaged, which, being a favourite walk with his sister, she might perhaps have adopted from mere habit, when in a state of mind which, he had too much reason to fear, must have put choice out of the question.

He soon reached the summer-house, which was merely a seat covered overhead and on the sides, open in front, and neatly paved with pebbles. This little bower was perched, like a hawk's nest, almost upon the edge of a projecting crag, the highest point of the line of rock which we have noticed; and had been selected by poor Clara on account of the prospect which it commanded down the valley. One of her gloves lay on the small rustic table in the summer-house. Mowbray caught it eagerly up. It was drenched with wet; the preceding day had been dry, so that, had she forgot it there in the morning or in the course of the day, it could not have been in that state. She had certainly been there during the night, when it rained heavily.

Mowbray, thus assured that Clara had been in this place, while her passions and fears were so much afloat as they must have been at her flight from her father's house, cast a hurried and terrified glance from the brow of the precipice into the deep stream that eddied below. It seemed to him that, in the sullen roar of the water, he heard the last groans of his sister; the foam-flakes caught his eye, as if they were a part of her

'When and where?' eagerly demanded the querist.

'Ou, just yestreen, after tey-time, afore ye cam hame yoursell galloping sae fast,' said old Joseph.

'I am as stupid as he, to put off my time in speaking to such an old cabbage-stock!' said Mowbray, and hastened on to the postern-gate already mentioned, leading from the garden into what was usually called Miss Clara's Walk. Two or three domestics, whispering to each other, and with countenances that showed grief, fear, and suspicion, followed their master, desirous to be employed, yet afraid to force their services on the fiery young man.

At the little postern he found some trace of her he sought. The pass-key of Clara was left in the lock. It was then plain that she must have passed that way; but at what hour, or for what purpose, Mowbray dared not conjecture. The path, after running a quarter of a mile or more through an open grove of oaks and sycamores, attained the verge of the large brook, and became there steep and rocky, difficult to the infirm and alarming to the nervous; often approaching the brink of a precipitous ledge of rock, which in this place overhung the stream, in some places brawling and foaming in hasty current, and in others seeming to slumber in deep and circular eddies. The temptations which this dangerous scene must have offered an excited and desperate spirit came on Mowbray like the blight of the simoom, and he stood a moment to gather breath and overcome these horrible anticipations, ere he was able to proceed. His attendants felt the same apprehension. 'Puir thing — puir thing! O, God send she may not have been left to hersell! God send she may have been upholden!' were whispered by Patrick to the maidens, and by them to each other.

At this moment the old gardener was heard behind them, shouting, 'Master — St. Ronan's — master — I have fund — I have fund ——'

'Have you found my sister?' exclaimed the brother, with breathless anxiety.

The old man did not answer till he came up, and then, with his usual slowness of delivery, he replied to his master's repeated inquiries, 'Na, I haena fund Miss Clara, but I hae fund something ye wad be wae to lose — your braw hunting-knife.'

He put the implement into the hand of its owner, who, recollecting the circumstances under which he had flung it from him last night, and the now too probable consequences of that inter-

spread the alarm and institute a general search after her, since her elopement from Shaws Castle could, in that case, no longer be concealed. We must leave him, however, in his present state of uncertainty, in order to acquaint our readers with the reality of those evils which his foreboding mind and disturbed conscience could only anticipate.

garments. But a closer examination showed that there was no appearance of such a catastrophe. Descending the path on the other side of the bower, he observed a footprint in a place where the clay was moist and tenacious, which, from the small size and the shape of the shoe, it appeared to him must be a trace of her whom he sought. He hurried forward, therefore, with as much speed as yet permitted him to look out keenly for similar impressions, of which it seemed to him he remarked several, although less perfect than the former, being much obliterated by the quantity of rain that had since fallen — a circumstance seeming to prove that several hours had elapsed since the person had passed.

At length, through the various turnings and windings of a long and romantic path, Mowbray found himself, without having received any satisfactory intelligence, by the side of the brook called St. Ronan's Burn, at the place where it was crossed by foot-passengers by the Clattering Brig, and by horsemen through a ford a little lower. At this point the fugitive might have either continued her wanderings through her paternal woods, by a path which, after winding about a mile, returned to Shaws Castle, or she might have crossed the bridge and entered a broken horse-way, common to the public, leading to the Aultoun of St. Ronan's.

Mowbray, after a moment's consideration, concluded that the last was her most probable option. He mounted his horse, which the groom had brought down according to order, and commanding the man to return by the footpath, which he himself could not examine, he proceeded to ride towards the ford. The brook was swollen during the night, and the groom could not forbear intimating to his master that there was considerable danger in attempting to cross it. But Mowbray's mind and feelings were too high-strung to permit him to listen to cautious counsel. He spurred the snorting and reluctant horse into the torrent, though the water, rising high on the upper side, broke both over the pommel and the croupe of his saddle. It was by exertion of great strength and sagacity that the good horse kept the ford-way. Had the stream forced him down among the rocks which lie below the crossing-place the consequences must have been fatal. Mowbray, however, reached the opposite side in safety, to the joy and admiration of the servant, who stood staring at him during the adventure. He then rode hastily towards the Aultoun, determined, if he could not hear tidings of his sister in that village, that he would

from her glove remaining there, and had crossed the foot-bridge; although it was almost wonderful that, in so dark a night, she should have followed with such accuracy a track where the missing a single turn by a cubit's length might have precipitated her into eternity.

It is probable that Clara's spirits and strength began in some degree to fail her after she had proceeded a little way on the road to the Aultoun; for she had stopped at the solitary cottage inhabited by the old female pauper who had been for a time the hostess of the penitent and dying Hannah Irwin. Here, as the inmate of the cottage acknowledged, she had made some knocking, and she owned she had heard her moan bitterly as she entreated for admission. The old hag was one of those whose hearts adversity turns to very stone, and obstinately kept her door shut, impelled more probably by general hatred to the human race than by the superstitious fears which seized her; although she perversely argued that she was startled at the supernatural melody and sweetness of tone with which the benighted wanderer made her supplication. She admitted that, when she heard the poor petitioner turn from the door, her heart was softened, and she did intend to open with the purpose of offering her at least a shelter; but that before she could 'hirple to the door, and get the bar taken down,' the unfortunate suppliant was not to be seen, which strengthened the old woman's opinion that the whole was a delusion of Satan.

It is conjectured that the repulsed wanderer made no other attempt to awaken pity or obtain shelter until she came to Mr. Cargill's manse, in the upper room of which a light was still burning, owing to a cause which requires some explanation.

The reader is aware of the reasons which induced Bulmer, or the titular Lord Etherington, to withdraw from the country the sole witness, as he conceived, who could, or at least who might choose to, bear witness to the fraud which he had practised on the unfortunate Clara Mowbray. Of three persons present at the marriage, besides the parties, the clergyman was completely deceived. Solmes he conceived to be at his own exclusive devotion; and, therefore, if by his means this Hannah Irwin could be removed from the scene, he argued plausibly that all evidence to the treachery which he had practised would be effectually stifled. Hence his agent, Solmes, had received a commission, as the reader may remember, to effect her removal without loss of time, and had reported to his master that his efforts had been effectual.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

The Catastrophe

What sheeted ghost is wandering through the storm?
For never did a maid of middle earth
Choose such a time or spot to vent her sorrows.

Old Play.

GRIEF, shame, confusion, and terror had contributed to overwhelm the unfortunate Clara Mowbray at the moment when she parted with her brother after the stormy and dangerous interview which it was our task to record in a former chapter. For years her life, her whole tenor of thought, had been haunted by the terrible apprehension of a discovery, and now the thing which she feared had come upon her. The extreme violence of her brother, which went so far as to menace her personal safety, had united with the previous conflict of passions to produce a rapture of fear, which probably left her no other free agency than that which she derived from the blind instinct which urges flight as the readiest resource in danger.

We have no means of exactly tracing the course of this unhappy young woman. It is probable she fled from Shaws Castle on hearing the arrival of Mr. Touchwood's carriage, which she might mistake for that of Lord Etherington; and thus, while Mowbray was looking forward to the happier prospects which the traveller's narrative seemed to open, his sister was contending with rain and darkness, amidst the difficulties and dangers of the mountain path which we have described. These were so great, that a young woman more delicately brought up must either have lain down exhausted or have been compelled to turn her steps back to the residence she had abandoned. But the solitary wanderings of Clara had inured her to fatigue and to night-walks; and the deeper causes of terror which urged her to flight rendered her insensible to the perils of her way. She had passed the bower, as was evident

not to proceed to take the sick woman's declaration or confession until he arrived, unless in case of extremity.

It had been an easy matter for Solmes to transfer the invalid from the wretched cottage to the clergyman's manse. The first appearance of the associate of much of her guilt had indeed terrified her; but he scrupled not to assure her that his penitence was equal to her own, and that he was conveying her where their joint deposition would be formally received, in order that they might, so far as possible, atone for the evil of which they had been jointly guilty. He also promised her kind usage for herself and support for her children; and she willingly accompanied him to the clergyman's residence, he himself resolving to abide in concealment the issue of the mystery, without again facing his master, whose star, as he well discerned, was about to shoot speedily from its exalted sphere.

The clergyman visited the unfortunate patient, as he had done frequently during her residence in his vicinity, and desired that she might be carefully attended. During the whole day, she seemed better; but, whether the means of supporting her exhausted frame had been too liberally administered, or whether the thoughts which gnawed her conscience had returned with double severity when she was released from the pressure of immediate want, it is certain that, about midnight, the fever began to gain ground, and the person placed in attendance on her came to inform the clergyman, then deeply engaged with the siege of Ptolemais, that she doubted if the woman would live till morning, and that she had something lay heavy at her heart, which she wished, as the emissary expressed it, 'to make a clean breast of' before she died, or lost possession of her senses.

Awakened by such a crisis, Mr. Cargill at once became a man of this world, clear in his apprehension and cool in his resolution, as he always was when the path of duty lay before him. Comprehending, from the various hints of his friend Touchwood, that the matter was of the last consequence, his own humanity, as well as inexperience, dictated his sending for skilful assistance. His man-servant was accordingly despatched on horseback to the Well for Dr. Quackleben; while, upon the suggestion of one of his maids, 'that Mrs. Dods was an uncommon skeely body about a sick-bed,' the wench was dismissed to supplicate the assistance of the gudewife of the Cleikum, which she was not, indeed, wont to refuse whenever it could be

But Solmes, since he had fallen under the influence of Touchwood, was constantly employed in counteracting the schemes which he seemed most active in forwarding, while the traveller enjoyed (to him an exquisite gratification) the amusement of countermining as fast as Bulmer could mine, and had a prospect the pleasing anticipation of blowing up the pioneer with his own petard. For this purpose, as soon as Touchwood learned that his house was to be applied to for the original deeds left in charge by the deceased Earl of Etherington, he expedited a letter, directing that only the copies should be sent, and thus rendered nugatory Bulmer's desperate design of possessing himself of that evidence. For the same reason, when Solmes announced to him his master's anxious wish to have Hannah Irwin conveyed out of the country, he appointed him to cause the sick woman to be carefully transported to the manse, where Mr. Cargill was easily induced to give her temporary refuge.

To this good man, who might be termed an Israelite without guile, the distress of the unhappy woman would have proved a sufficient recommendation; nor was he likely to have inquired whether her malady might not be infectious, or to have made any of those other previous investigations which are sometimes clogs upon the bounty or hospitality of more prudent philanthropists. But to interest him yet farther, Mr. Touchwood informed him by letter that the patient (not otherwise unknown to him) was possessed of certain most material information affecting a family of honour and consequence, and that he himself, with Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's in the quality of a magistrate, intended to be at the manse that evening, to take her declaration upon this important subject. Such indeed was the traveller's purpose, which might have been carried into effect, but for his own self-important love of manœuvring on the one part, and the fiery impatience of Mowbray on the other, which, as the reader knows, sent the one at full gallop to Shaws Castle, and obliged the other to follow him post haste. This necessity he intimated to the clergyman by a note, which he despatched express as he himself was in the act of stepping into the chaise.)

He requested that the most particular attention should be paid to the invalid; promised to be at the manse with Mr. Mowbray early on the morrow; and, with the lingering and inveterate self-conceit which always induced him to conduct everything with his own hand, directed his friend, Mr. Cargill,

gill, holding the candle so as to throw some light on the face of the sick woman. 'I cannot believe it.'

'No?' replied the penitent. 'There is indeed a difference between wickedness in the act of carrying through its successful machinations and wickedness surrounded by all the horrors of a death-bed.'

'Do not yet despair,' said Cargill. 'Grace is omnipotent; to doubt this is in itself a great crime.'

'Be it so! I cannot help it: my heart is hardened, Mr. Cargill; and there is something here,' she pressed her bosom, 'which tells me that with prolonged life and renewed health even my present agonies would be forgotten, and I should become the same I have been before. I have rejected the offer of grace, Mr. Cargill, and not through ignorance, for I have sinned with my eyes open. Care not for me, then, who am a mere outcast.' He again endeavoured to interrupt her, but she continued, 'Or if you really wish my welfare, let me relieve my bosom of that which presses it, and it may be that I shall then be better able to listen to you. You say you remember me not; but if I tell you how often you refused to perform in secret the office which was required of you, how much you urged that it was against your canonical rules; if I name the argument to which you yielded, and remind you of your purpose to acknowledge your transgression to your brethren in the church courts, to plead your excuse, and submit to their censure, which you said could not be a light one—you will be then aware that, in the voice of the miserable pauper, you hear the words of the once artful, gay, and specious Hannah Irwin.'

'I allow it—I allow it,' said Mr. Cargill: 'I admit the tokens, and believe you to be indeed her whose name you assume.'

'Then one painful step is over,' said she; 'for I would ere now have lightened my conscience by confession, saving for the cursed pride of spirit which was ashamed of poverty, though it had not shrunk from guilt. Well, in these arguments, which were urged to you by a youth best known to you by the name of Francis Tyrrel, though more properly entitled to that of Valentine Bulmer, we practised on you a base and gross deception. Did you not hear some one sigh? I hope there is no one in the room. I trust I shall die when my confession is signed and sealed, without my name being dragged through the public. I hope ye bring not in your menials to gaze on my abject misery; I cannot brook that.'

useful. The male emissary proved, in Scottish phrase, a 'corbie messenger'; for either he did not find the doctor, or he found him better engaged than to attend the sick-bed of a pauper, at a request which promised such slight remuneration as that of a parish minister. But the female ambassador was more successful; for, though she found our friend Luckie Dods preparing for bed at an hour unusually late, in consequence of some anxiety on account of Mr. Touchwood's unexpected absence, the good old dame only growled a little about the minister's fancies in 'taking puir bodies into his own house'; and then, instantly donning cloak, hood, and pattens, marched down the gate with all the speed of the good Samaritan, one maid bearing the lantern before her, while the other remained to keep the house, and to attend to the wants of Mr. Tyrrel, who engaged willingly to sit up to receive Mr. Touchwood.

But, ere Dame Dods had arrived at the manse, the patient had summoned Mr. Cargill to her presence, and required him to write her confession while she had life and breath to make it.

'For I believe,' she added, raising herself in the bed and rolling her eyes wildly around, 'that, were I to confess my guilt to one of a less sacred character, the Evil Spirit, whose servant I have been, would carry away his prey, both body and soul, before they had severed from each other, however short the space that they must remain in partnership!'

Mr. Cargill would have spoken some ghostly consolation, but she answered with pettish impatience, 'Waste not words—waste not words! Let me speak that which I must tell, and sign it with my hand; and do you, as the more immediate servant of God, and therefore bound to bear witness to the truth, take heed you write that which I tell you, and nothing else. I desired to have told this to St. Ronan's; I have even made some progress in telling it to others; but I am glad I broke short off, for I know you, Josiah Cargill, though you have long forgotten me.'

'It may be so,' said Cargill. 'I have indeed no recollection of you.'

'You once knew Hannah Irwin, though,' said the sick woman, 'who was companion and relation to Miss Clara Mowbray, and who was present with her on that sinful night when she was wedded in the kirk of St. Ronan's.'

'Do you mean to say that you are that person?' said Car-

'Well, then,' said the sick woman, 'Clara Mowbray ought to forgive me, since what ill I have done her was inevitable, while the good I did was voluntary. I must see her, Josiah Cargill — I must see her before I die; I shall never pray till I see her — I shall never profit by word of godliness till I see her! If I cannot obtain the pardon of a worm like myself, how can I hope for that of ——'

She started at these words with a faint scream; for slowly, and with a feeble hand, the curtains of the bed opposite to the side at which Cargill sat were opened, and the figure of Clara Mowbray, her clothes and long hair drenched and dripping with rain, stood in the opening by the bedside. The dying woman sat upright, her eyes starting from their sockets, her lips quivering, her face pale, her emaciated hands grasping the bed-clothes as if to support herself, and looking as much aghast as if her confession had called up the apparition of her betrayed friend.

'Hannah Irwin,' said Clara, with her usual sweetness of tone, 'my early friend — my unprovoked enemy, betake thee to Him who hath pardon for us all, and betake thee with confidence; for I pardon you as freely as if you had never wronged me — as freely as I desire my own pardon. Farewell — farewell!'

She retired from the room ere the clergyman could convince himself that it was more than a phantom which he beheld. He ran downstairs, he summoned assistants; but no one could attend his call, for the deep ruckling groans of the patient satisfied every one that she was breathing her last; and Mrs. Dods, with the maid-servant, ran into the bedroom to witness the death of Hannah Irwin, which shortly after took place.

That event had scarcely occurred, when the maid-servant who had been left in the inn came down in great terror to acquaint her mistress that a lady had entered the house like a ghost, and was dying in Mr. Tyrrel's room. The truth of the story we must tell our own way.

In the irregular state of Miss Mowbray's mind, a less violent impulse than that which she had received from her brother's arbitrary violence, added to the fatigues, dangers, and terrors of her night-walk, might have exhausted the powers of her body and alienated those of her mind. We have before said that the lights in the clergyman's house had probably attracted her attention, and in the temporary confusion of a family

She paused and listened; for the ear, usually deafened by pain, is sometimes, on the contrary, rendered morbidly acute. Mr. Cargill assured her there was no one present but himself. 'But, O, most unhappy woman!' he said, 'what does your introduction prepare me to expect?'

'Your expectation, be it ever so ominous, shall be fully satisfied.¹ I was the guilty confidante of the false Francis Tyrrel. Clara loved the true one. When the fatal ceremony passed, the bride and the clergyman were deceived alike, and I was the wretch—the fiend—who, aiding another yet blacker, if blacker could be, mainly helped to accomplish this cureless misery!'

'Wretch!' exclaimed the clergyman; 'and had you not then done enough? Why did you expose the betrothed of one brother to become the wife of another?'

'I acted,' said the sick woman, 'only as Bulmer instructed me; but I had to do with a master of the game. He contrived, by his agent Solmes, to match me with a husband imposed on me by his devices as a man of fortune—a wretch who maltreated me, plundered me, sold me. Oh! if fiends laugh, as I have heard they can, what a jubilee of scorn will there be when Bulmer and I enter their place of torture! Hark! I am sure of it: some one draws breath, as if shuddering!'

'You will distract yourself if you give way to these fancies. Be calm; speak on; but, oh! at last, and for once, speak the truth!'

'I will, for it will best gratify my hatred against him who, having first robbed me of my virtue, made me a sport and a plunder to the basest of the species. For that I wandered here to unmask him. I had heard he again stirred his suit to Clara, and I came here to tell young Mowbray the whole. But do you wonder that I shrunk from doing so till this last decisive moment? I thought of my conduct to Clara, and how could I face her brother? And yet I hated her not after I learned her utter wretchedness, her deep misery, verging even upon madness—I hated her not then. I was sorry that she was not to fall to the lot of a better man than Bulmer; and I pitied her after she was rescued by Tyrrel, and you may remember it was I who prevailed on you to conceal her marriage.'

'I remember it,' answered Cargill, 'and that you alleged, as a reason for secrecy, danger from her family. I did conceal it until reports that she was again to be married reached my ears.'

¹ [See Appendix, p. 429.]

she had never ceased to love, in a state little short of distraction, and tended by Tyrrel, whose state of mind seemed scarce more composed than that of the unhappy patient. The oddities of Mrs. Dods were merely the rust which had accumulated upon her character, but without impairing its native strength and energy; and her sympathies were not of a kind acute enough to disable her from thinking and acting as decisively as circumstances required.

'Mr. Tyrrel,' she said, 'this is nae sight for men folk; ye maun rise and gang to another room.'

'I will not stir from her,' said Tyrrel — 'I will not remove from her either now or as long as she or I may live.'

'That will be nae lang space, Maister Tyrrel, if ye winna be ruled by common sense.'

Tyrrel started up, as if half comprehending what she said, but remained motionless.

'Come — come,' said the compassionate landlady; 'do not stand looking on a sight sair enough to break a harder heart than yours, hinny: your ain sense tells ye, ye canna stay here. Miss Clara shall be weel cared for, and I'll bring word to your room door frae half-hour to half-hour how she is.'

The necessity of the case was undeniable, and Tyrrel suffered himself to be led to another apartment, leaving Miss Mowbray to the care of the hostess and her female assistants. He counted the hours in an agony, less by the watch than by the visits which Mrs. Dods, faithful to her promise, made from interval to interval, to tell him that Clara was not better — that she was worse — and, at last, that she did not think she could live over morning. It required all the deprecatory influence of the good landlady to restrain Tyrrel, who, calm and cold on common occasions, was proportionally fierce and impetuous when his passions were afloat, from bursting into the room and ascertaining, with his own eyes, the state of the beloved patient. At length there was a long interval — an interval of hours — so long, indeed, that Tyrrel caught from it the flattering hope that Clara slept, and that sleep might bring refreshment both to mind and body. Mrs. Dods, he concluded, was prevented from moving, for fear of disturbing her patient's slumber; and, as if actuated by the same feeling which he imputed to her, he ceased to traverse his apartment, as his agitation had hitherto dictated, and throwing himself into a chair, forbore to move even a finger, and withheld his respiration as much as possible, just as if he had been seated by

never remarkable for its regularity, she easily mounted the stairs and entered the sick-chamber undiscovered, and thus overheard Hannah Irwin's confession — a tale sufficient to have greatly aggravated her mental malady.

We have no means of knowing whether she actually sought Tyrrel, or whether it was, as in the former case, the circumstance of a light still burning where all around was dark that attracted her; but her next apparition was close by the side of her unfortunate lover, then deeply engaged in writing, when something suddenly gleamed on a large, old-fashioned mirror which hung on the wall opposite. He looked up, and saw the figure of Clara, holding a light (which she had taken from the passage) in her extended hand. He stood for an instant with his eyes fixed on this fearful shadow, ere he dared turn round on the substance which was thus reflected. When he did so, the fixed and pallid countenance almost impressed him with the belief that he saw a vision, and he shuddered when, stooping beside him, she took his hand. 'Come away!' she said, in a hurried voice — 'come away, my brother follows to kill us both. Come, Tyrrel, let us fly; we shall easily escape him. Hannah Irwin is on before; but, if we are overtaken, I will have no more fighting — you must promise me that we shall not; we have had but too much of that, but you will be wise in future.'

'Clara Mowbray!' exclaimed Tyrrel. 'Alas! is it thus? Stay — do not go,' for she turned to make her escape — 'stay — stay — sit down.'

'I must go,' she replied — 'I must go — I am called. Hannah Irwin is gone before to tell all, and I must follow. Will you not let me go? Nay, if you will hold me by force, I know I must sit down; but you will not be able to keep me for all that.'

A convulsion fit followed, and seemed by its violence to explain that she was indeed bound for the last and darksome journey. The maid, who at length answered Tyrrel's earnest and repeated summons, fled terrified at the scene she witnessed, and carried to the manse the alarm which we before mentioned.

The old landlady was compelled to exchange one scene of sorrow for another, wondering within herself what fatality could have marked this single night with so much misery. When she arrived at home, what was her astonishment to find there the daughter of the house which, even in their alienation,

she had never ceased to love, in a state little short of distraction, and tended by Tyrrel, whose state of mind seemed scarce more composed than that of the unhappy patient. The oddities of Mrs. Dods were merely the rust which had accumulated upon her character, but without impairing its native strength and energy; and her sympathies were not of a kind acute enough to disable her from thinking and acting as decisively as circumstances required.

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the pillow of the patient. Morning was far advanced, when his landlady appeared in his room with a grave and anxious countenance.

'Mr. Tyrrel,' she said, 'ye are a Christian man.'

'Hush—hush, for Heaven's sake!' he replied; 'you will disturb Miss Mowbray.'

'Naething will disturb her, puir thing,' answered Mrs. Dods; 'they have muckle to answer for that brought her to this!'

'They have—they have indeed,' said Tyrrel, striking his forehead; 'and I will see her avenged on every one of them! Can I see her?'

'Better not—better not,' said the good woman; but he burst from her and rushed into the apartment.

'Is life gone? Is every spark extinct?' he exclaimed eagerly to a country surgeon, a sensible man, who had been summoned from Marchthorn in the course of the night. The medical man shook his head. Tyrrel rushed to the bedside and was convinced by his own eyes that the being whose sorrows he had both caused and shared was now insensible to all earthly calamity. He raised almost a shriek of despair as he threw himself on the pale hand of the corpse, wet it with tears, devoured it with kisses, and played for a short time the part of a distracted person. At length, on the repeated expostulation of all present, he suffered himself to be again conducted to another apartment, the surgeon following, anxious to give such sad consolation as the case admitted of.

'As you are so deeply concerned for the untimely fate of this young lady,' he said, 'it may be some satisfaction to you, though a melancholy one, to know that it has been occasioned by a pressure on the brain, probably accompanied by a suffusion; and I feel authorised in stating, from the symptoms, that if life had been spared, reason would, in all probability, never have returned. In such a case, sir, the most affectionate relation must own that death, in comparison to life, is a mercy.'

'Mercy!' answered Tyrrel; 'but why, then, is it denied to me? I know—I know! My life is spared till I revenge her.'

He started from his seat and hurried eagerly downstairs. But, as he was about to rush from the door of the inn, he was stopped by Touchwood, who had just alighted from a carriage, with an air of stern anxiety imprinted on his features very different from their usual expression. 'Whither would ye?—whither would ye?' he said, laying hold of Tyrrel and stopping him by force.

'For revenge—for revenge!' said Tyrrel. 'Give way, I charge you, on your peril!'

'Vengeance belongs to God,' replied the old man, 'and His bolt has fallen. This way—this way,' he continued, dragging Tyrrel into the house. 'Know,' he said, so soon as he had led or forced him into a chamber, 'that Mowbray of St. Ronan's has met Bulmer within this half-hour, and has killed him on the spot.'

'Killed!—whom?' answered the bewildered Tyrrel.

'Valentine Bulmer, the titular Earl of Etherington.'

'You bring tidings of death to the house of death,' answered Tyrrel; 'and there is nothing in this world left that I should live for!'

CHAPTER XXXIX

Conclusion

Here come we to our close, for that which follows
Is but the tale of dull, unvaried misery.
Steep crags and headlong linns may court the pencil,
Like sudden haps, dark plots, and strange adventures ;
But who would paint the dull and fog-wrapt moor,
In its long track of sterile desolation ?

Old Play.

WHEN Mowbray crossed the brook, as we have already detailed, his mind was in that wayward and uncertain state which seeks something whereon to vent the self-engendered rage with which it labours, like a volcano before eruption. On a sudden, a shot or two, followed by loud voices and laughter, reminded him he had promised, at that hour, and in that sequestered place, to decide a bet respecting pistol-shooting, to which the titular Lord Etherington, Jekyl, and Captain MacTurk, to whom such a pastime was peculiarly congenial, were parties as well as himself. The prospect this recollection afforded him, of vengeance on the man whom he regarded as the author of his sister's wrongs, was, in the present state of his mind, too tempting to be relinquished ; and, setting spurs to his horse, he rushed through the copse to the little glade, where he found the other parties, who, despairing of his arrival, had already begun their amusement. A jubilee shout was set up as he approached.

'Here comes Mowbray, dripping, by Cot, like a watering-pan,' said Captain MacTurk.

'I fear him not,' said Etherington — we may as well still call him so — 'he has ridden too fast to have steady nerves.'

'We shall soon see that, my Lord Etherington, or rather Mr. Valentine Bulmer,' said Mowbray, springing from his horse and throwing the bridle over the bough of a tree.

'What does this mean, Mr. Mowbray ?' said Etherington,

drawing himself up, while Jekyl and Captain MacTurk looked at each other in surprise.

'It means, sir, that you are a rascal and impostor,' replied Mowbray, 'who have assumed a name to which you have no right.'

'That, Mr. Mowbray, is an insult I cannot carry farther than this spot,' said Etherington.

'If you had been willing to do so, you should have carried with it something still harder to be borne,' answered Mowbray.

'Enough — enough, my good sir : no use in spurring a willing horse. Jekyl, you will have the kindness to stand by me in this matter?'

'Certainly, my lord,' said Jekyl.

'And, as there seems to be no chance of taking up the matter amicably,' said the pacific Captain MacTurk, 'I will be most happy, so help me, to assist my worthy friend, Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's, with my countenance and advice. Very good chance that we were here with the necessary weapons, since it would have been an unpleasant thing to have such an affair long upon the stomach, any more than to settle it without witnesses.'

'I would fain know first,' said Jekyl, 'what all this sudden heat has arisen about.'

'About nothing,' said Etherington, 'except a mare's nest of Mr. Mowbray's discovering. He always knew his sister played the madwoman, and he has now heard a report, I suppose, that she has likewise in her time played the — fool.'

'O, crimini!' cried Captain MacTurk, 'my good captain, let us pe loading and measuring out; for, by my soul, if these sweetmeats be passing between them, it is only the twa ends of a hankercher that can serve the turn, Cot tamn!'

With such friendly intentions, the ground was hastily meted out. Each was well known as an excellent shot; and the captain offered a bet to Jekyl of a mutchkin of Glenlivat, that both would fall by the first fire. The event showed that he was nearly right; for the ball of Lord Etherington grazed Mowbray's temple, at the very second of time when Mowbray's pierced his heart. He sprung a yard from the ground, and fell down a dead man. Mowbray stood fixed like a pillar of stone, his arm dropped to his side, his hand still clenched on the weapon of death, reeking at the touch-hole and muzzle. Jekyl ran to raise and support his friend, and Captain MacTurk, having adjusted his spectacles, stooped on one knee to look him

in the face. 'We should have had Dr. Quackleben here,' he said, wiping his glasses, and returning them to the shagreen case, 'though it would have been only for form's sake, for he is as dead as a toor-nail, poor boy. But come, Mowbray, my bairn,' he said, taking him by the arm, 'we must be ganging our ain gait, you and me, before waur comes of it. I have a bit powney here, and you have your horse till we get to March-thorn. Captain Jekyl, I wish you a good morning. Will you have my umbrella back to the inn, for I surmeese it is going to rain?'

Mowbray had not ridden a hundred yards with his guide and companion, when he drew his bridle, and refused to proceed a step farther, till he had learned what was become of Clara. The captain began to find he had a very untractable pupil to manage, when, while they were arguing together, Touchwood drove past in his hack-chaise. As soon as he recognised Mowbray, he stopped the carriage to inform him that his sister was at the Aultoun, which he had learned from finding there had been a messenger sent from thence to the Well for medical assistance, which could not be afforded, the Esculapius of the place, Dr. Quackleben, having been privately married to Mrs. Blower on that morning by Mr. Chatterly, and having set out on the usual nuptial tour.

In return for this intelligence, Captain MacTurk communicated the fate of Lord Etherington. The old man earnestly pressed instant flight, for which he supplied at the same time ample means, engaging to furnish every kind of assistance and support to the unfortunate young lady; and representing to Mowbray that if he staid in the vicinity a prison would soon separate them. Mowbray and his companion then departed southward upon the spur, reached London in safety, and from thence went together to the Peninsula, where the war was then at the hottest.

There remains little more to be told. Mr. Touchwood is still alive, forming plans which have no object, and accumulating a fortune, for which he has apparently no heir. The old man had endeavoured to fix this character, as well as his general patronage, upon Tyrrel, but the attempt only determined the latter to leave the country; nor has he been since heard of, although the title and estates of Etherington lie vacant for his acceptance. It is the opinion of many that he has entered into a Moravian mission, for the use of which he had previously drawn considerable sums.

Since Tyrrel's departure, no one pretends to guess what old Touchwood will do with his money. He often talks of his disappointments, but can never be made to understand, or at least to admit, that they were in some measure precipitated by his own talent for intrigue and manœuvring. Most people think that Mowbray of St. Ronan's will be at last his heir. That gentleman has of late shown one quality which usually recommends men to the favour of rich relations, namely, a close and cautious care of what is already his own. Captain MacTurk's military ardour having revived when they came within smell of gunpowder, the old soldier contrived not only to get himself on full pay, but to induce his companion to serve for some time as a volunteer. He afterwards obtained a commission, and nothing could be more strikingly different than was the conduct of the young laird of St. Ronan's and of Lieutenant Mowbray. The former, as we know, was gay, venturous, and prodigal; the latter lived on his pay, and even within it, denied himself comforts, and often decencies, when doing so could save a guinea, and turned pale with apprehension if, on any extraordinary occasion, he ventured sixpence a corner at whist. This meanness, or closeness, of disposition prevents his holding the high character to which his bravery and attention to his regimental duties might otherwise entitle him. The same close and accurate calculation of pounds, shillings, and pence marked his communications with his agent Meiklewham, who might otherwise have had better pickings out of the estate of St. Ronan's, which is now at nurse, and thriving full fast; especially since some debts, of rather an usurious character, have been paid up by Mr. Touchwood, who contented himself with more moderate usage.

On the subject of this property, Mr. Mowbray, generally speaking, gave such minute directions for acquiring and saving, that his old acquaintance, Mr. Winterblossom, tapping his morocco snuff-box, with the sly look which intimated the coming of a good thing, was wont to say that 'He had reversed the usual order of transformation, and was turned into a grub after having been a butterfly.' After all, this narrowness, though a more ordinary modification of the spirit of avarice, may be founded on the same desire of acquisition which in his earlier days sent him to the gaming-table.

But there was one remarkable instance in which Mr. Mowbray departed from the rules of economy, by which he was guided in all others. Having acquired, for a large sum of

money, the ground which he had formerly feued out for the erection of the hotel, lodging-houses, shops, etc., at St. Ronan's Well, he sent positive orders for the demolition of the whole, nor would he permit the existence of any house of entertainment on his estate except that in the Aultoun, where Mrs. Dods reigns with undisputed sway, her temper by no means improved either by time or her arbitrary disposition by the total absence of competition.¹

Why Mr. Mowbray, with his acquired habits of frugality, thus destroyed a property which might have produced a considerable income, no one could pretend to affirm. Some said that he remembered his own early follies; and others, that he connected the buildings with the misfortunes of his sister. The vulgar reported that Lord Etherington's ghost had been seen in the ball-room, and the learned talked of the association of ideas. But it all ended in this, that Mr. Mowbray was independent enough to please himself, and that such was Mr. Mowbray's pleasure.

The little watering-place has returned to its primitive obscurity; and lions and lionesses, with their several jackalls, blue surtouts, and bluer stockings, fiddlers and dancers, painters and amateurs, authors and critics, dispersed like pigeons by the demolition of a dovecot, have sought other scenes of amusement and rehearsal, and have deserted ST. RONAN'S WELL.

¹ See Meg Dods. Note 12.

APPENDIX

[LOCKHART, speaking of *St. Ronan's Well* in his *Life of Scott*, vol. vii. pp. 208, 209, says, 'James Ballantyne suddenly took vast alarm about a particular feature in the history of the heroine. In the original conception, and in the book as actually written and printed, Miss Mowbray's mock marriage had not halted at the profane ceremony of the church: and the delicate printer shrunk from the idea of obtruding on the fastidious public the possibility of any personal contamination having been incurred by a high-born damsel of the 19th century. Scott was at first inclined to dismiss his friend's scruples as briefly as he had done those of Blackwood in the case of *The Black Dwarf*. "You would never have quarrelled with it," he said, "had the thing happened to a girl in gingham; the silk petticoat can make little difference." James reclaimed with double energy, and called Constable to the rescue; and after some pause the Author very reluctantly consented to cancel and re-write about twenty-four pages, which was enough to obliterate, to a certain extent, the dreaded scandal, and in a similar degree, as he always persisted, to perplex and weaken the course of his narrative..and the dark effect of its catastrophe.'

By the kindness of J. M. Collyer, Esq., who communicated on the subject with *The Athenæum* (4th February 1893), we are enabled to print, below, in parallel columns, that portion of the original, together with the existing, version which deals with the confession of Hannah Irwin to the Rev. Josiah Cargill, in chapter xxxviii.]

ORIGINAL VERSION

'O most unhappy woman,' he said, 'what does your introduction prepare me to expect?'

'Your expectation, be it ever so ominous, shall be fully satisfied. That Bulmer, when he told you that a secret marriage was necessary to Miss Mowbray's honour, thought that he was imposing on you. But he told you a fatal truth, so far as concerned Clara. She had indeed fallen, but Bulmer was not her seducer—knew nothing of the truth of what he so strongly asseverated.'

'He was not her lover, then? And how came he, then, to press to marry her? Or, how came you —'

'Hear me—but question not. Bulmer had gained the advantage over me which he pretended to have had over Clara. From that moment my companion's virtue became at once the object of my envy and hatred; yet, so innocent were the lovers, that, despite of the various arts which I used to entrap them, they remained guiltless until the fatal evening when Clara met Tyrrel for the last time ere he removed from the neighbourhood—and then the devil and Hannah Irwin triumphed. Much there was of remorse—much of resolutions of separation, until the church should unite them; but these only forwarded my machinations, for I was determined she should wed Bulmer, not Tyrrel.'

EXISTING VERSION

'Your expectation, be it ever so ominous, shall be fully satisfied. I was the guilty confidante of the false Francis Tyrrel. Clara loved the true one. When the fatal ceremony passed, the bride and clergyman were deceived alike; and I was the wretch—the fiend—who, aiding another yet blacker, if blacker could be, mainly helped to accomplish this cureless misery!'

'Wretch!' exclaimed the clergyman; 'and had you not then done enough? Why did you expose the paramour of one brother to become the wife of another?'

She paused, and answered sullenly, 'I had my reasons. Bulmer had treated me with scorn. He told me plainly that he used me but as a stepping-stone to his own purposes, and that these finally centred in wedding Clara. I was resolved he should wed her, and take with her infamy and misery to his bed.'

'This was too horrible,' said Cargill, endeavouring, with a trembling hand, to make minutes of her confession.

'Ay,' said the sick woman, 'but I contended with a master of the game, who played me stratagem for stratagem. If I destined for him a dishonoured wife, he contrived, by his agent Solmes, to match me with a husband imposed on me by his devices as a man of fortune.'

'Wretch!' exclaimed the clergyman; 'and had you not then done enough? Why did you expose the betrothed of one brother to be the bride of another?'

'I acted,' said the sick woman, 'only as Bulmer instructed me; but I had to do with a master of the game. He contrived by his agent Solmes, etc.'

The cancelled proof-sheets of the original edition bear the endorsement, in Mr. Alexander Ballantyne's hand:—

'This sheet, the only copy in existence, contains "The Catastrophe" as originally written by Sir Walter Scott's friends.'

NOTES TO ST. RONAN'S WELL

NOTE 1. — SCOTT AT GILSLAND, p. x

MR. LOCKHART tells us that, 'After the rising of the Court of Session in July 1797, Scott set out on a tour to the lakes of Cumberland, and at length fixed his headquarters at the then peaceful and sequestered little watering-place of Gilsland, from which he made excursions to the various scenes of romantic interest commemorated in the *Bridal of Triermain*, and otherwise led very much the sort of life depicted among the loungers of *St. Ronan's Well*' [*Life of Scott*, i. 365]. Here also he fell in with his future wife, with whom he revisited the spa in 1805.

There has been some dublety expressed respecting the probable prototype of St. Ronan's Well, and several villages have laid claim to the identity. Judging, however, from the descriptions in the novel, it is certain the Author had no single place in his mind, but allowed his imagination a much wider range. While the scenery and localities depicted in the text may be partly recognised in Tweedside and the villages of Selkirk, Peebles, or Innerleithen, the descriptions of spa life will more correctly apply to such a watering-place as that of Gilsland (*Laing*).

NOTE 2. — INN CHARGES, p. 8

This was universally the case in Scotland forty or fifty years ago; and so little was charged for a domestic's living when the Author became first acquainted with the road, that a shilling or eighteen pence was sufficient board-wages for a man-servant, when a crown would not now answer the purpose. It is true, the cause of these reasonable charges rested upon a principle equally unjust to the landlord and inconvenient to the guest. The landlord did not expect to make anything upon the charge for eating which his bill contained; in consideration of which, the guest was expected to drink more wine than might be convenient or agreeable to him, 'for the good,' as it was called, 'of the house.' The landlord indeed was willing and ready to assist in this duty every stranger who came within his gates. Other things were in proportion. A charge for lodging, fire, and candle was long a thing unheard of in Scotland. A shilling to the housemaid settled all such considerations. I see, from memorandums of 1790, that a young man, with two ponies and a serving-lad, might travel from the house of one Meg Dods to another, through most part of Scotland, for about five or six shillings a-day.

NOTE 3. — BUILDING FEUS IN SCOTLAND, p. 9

In Scotland a village is erected upon a species of land-right, very different from the copyhold so frequent in England. Every alienation or sale

NOTE 7. — MAGO-PICO, p. 172

This satire, very popular even in Scotland, at least with one party, was composed at the expense of a reverend Presbyterian divine, of whom many stories are preserved, being Mr. Pyot, the Mago-Pico of the tale, minister of Dunbar. The work is now little known in Scotland, and not at all in England, though written with much strong and coarse humour, resembling the style of Arbuthnot. It was composed by Mr. Halliburton, a military chaplain. The distresses attending Mago-Pico's bachelor life are thus stated:—

'At the same time I desire you will figure only out to yourself his situation during his celibacy in the ministerial charge—a house all lying heaps upon heaps; his bed ill-made, swarming with fleas, and very cold on the winter nights; his sheep's-head not to be eaten for wool and hair, his broth stozed, his bread mouldy, his lamb and pig all scouthered; his linen neither washed nor plaited; his black stockings darned with white worsted above the shoes; his butter made into cat's barns; his cheese one heap of mites and maggots, and full of large avenues for rats and mice to play at hide-and-seek and make their nests in. Frequent were the admonitions he had given his maid-servants upon this score, and every now and then was turning them off; but still the last was the worst, and in the meanwhile the poor man was the sufferer. At any rate, therefore, matrimony must turn to his account, though his wife should prove to be nothing but a creature of the feminine gender, with a tongue in her head, and ten fingers on her hands, to clear the papers of the housemaid, not to mention the convenience of a man's having it in his power to beget sons and daughters in his own house.'—*Memoirs of Mago-Pico*, chap. vi. Second Edition. Edinburgh, 1701.

NOTE 8. — OPEN-AIR THEATRE, p. 208

At Kilruddery, the noble seat of Lord Meath, in the county of Wicklow, there is a situation for private theatrical exhibitions in the open air, planted out with the evergreens which arise there in the most luxuriant magnificence. It has a wild and romantic effect, reminding one of the scene in which Bottom rehearsed his pageant, with a green plot for a stage and a hawthorn brake for a tiring-room.

NOTE 9. — THE ARNAOUTS, p. 211

'The Arnauts or Albanese,' says Lord Byron, 'struck me forcibly by their resemblance to the Highlanders of Scotland, in dress, figure, and manner of living. Their very mountains seem Caledonian, with a kinder climate. The kilt, though white; the spare, active form; their dialect, Celtic in its sound; and their hardy habits, all carried me back to Morven.'—*Notes to the Second Canto of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*.

NOTE 10. — DOGS AS SHEEPSTEALERS, p. 347

There were several instances of this dexterity, but especially those which occurred in the celebrated case of Murdison and Millar in 1773. These persons, a sheep-farmer and his shepherd, settled in the vale of Tweed, commenced and carried on for some time an extensive system of devastation on the flocks of their neighbours. A dog belonging to Millar was so well trained that he had only to show him during the day the parcel of sheep which he desired to have; and when dismissed at night for the purpose, Yarrow went right to the pasture where the flock had fed, and carried off the quantity shown him. He then drove them before him by the most secret paths to

of landed property must be made in the shape of a feudal conveyance, and the party who acquires it holds thereby an absolute and perfect right of property in the fief, while he discharges the stipulations of the vassal, and, above all, pays the feu-duties. The vassal or tenant of the site of the smallest cottage holds his possession as absolutely as the proprietor, of whose large estate it is perhaps scarce a perceptible portion. By dint of excellent laws, the sasines, or deeds of delivery, of such fiefs are placed on record in such order that every burden affecting the property can be seen for payment of a very moderate fee; so that a person proposing to lend money upon it knows exactly the nature and extent of his security.

From the nature of these land-rights being so explicit and secure, the Scottish people have been led to entertain a jealousy of building leases, of however long duration. Not long ago, a great landed proprietor took the latter mode of disposing of some ground near a thriving town in the west country. The number of years in the lease was settled at nine hundred and ninety-nine. All was agreed to, and the deeds were ordered to be drawn. But the tenant, as he walked down the avenue, began to reflect that the lease, though so very long as to be almost perpetual, nevertheless had a termination; and that after the lapse of a thousand years, lacking one, the connexion of his family and representatives with the estate would cease. He took a qualm at the thought of the loss to be sustained by his posterity a thousand years hence, and going back to the house of the gentleman who feued the ground, he demanded, and readily obtained, the additional term of fifty years to be added to the lease.

NOTE 4. — DARK LADYE, p. 61

The *Dark Ladye* is one of those tantalising fragments in which Mr. Coleridge has shown us what exquisite powers of poetry he has suffered to remain uncultivated. Let us be thankful for what we have received, however. The unfashioned ore, drawn from so rich a mine, is worth all to which art can add its highest decorations when drawn from less abundant sources. The verses beginning the poem, which are published separately, are said to have soothed the last hours of Mr. Fox. They are the stanzas entitled *Love*.

NOTE 5. — DR. MACGREGOR; p. 70

The late Dr. Gregory is probably intimated, as one of the celebrated Dr. Cullen's personal habits is previously mentioned. Dr. Gregory was distinguished for putting his patients on a severe regimen.

NOTE 6. — KETTLE OF FISH, p. 128

A kettle of fish is a *fête champêtre* of a particular kind, which is to other *fêtes champêtres* what the piscatory eclogues of Brown or Sannazario are to pastoral poetry. A large caldron is boiled by the side of a salmon river, containing a quantity of water, thickened with salt to the consistence of brine. In this the fish is plunged when taken, and eaten by the company *fronde super viridi*. This is accounted the best way of eating salmon by those who desire to taste the fish in a state of extreme freshness. Others prefer it after being kept a day or two, when the curd melts into oil, and the fish becomes richer and more luscious. The more judicious gastronomes eat no other sauce than a spoonful of the water in which the salmon is boiled, together with a little pepper and vinegar.

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Murdison's farm, where the dishonest master and servant were in readiness to receive the booty. Two things were remarkable. In the first place, that if the dog, when thus dishonestly employed, actually met his master, he observed great caution in recognising him, as if he had been afraid of bringing him under suspicion; secondly, that he showed a distinct sense that the illegal transactions in which he was engaged were not of a nature to endure daylight. The sheep which he was directed to drive were often reluctant to leave their own pastures, and sometimes the intervention of rivers or other obstacles made their progress peculiarly difficult. On such occasions, Yarrow continued his efforts to drive his plunder forward until the day began to dawn—a signal which, he conceived, rendered it necessary for him to desert his spoil and slink homeward by a circuitous road. It is generally said this accomplished dog was hanged along with his master; but the truth is, he survived him long, in the service of a man in Leithen, yet was said afterwards to have shown little of the wonderful instinct exhibited in the employment of Millar.

Another instance of similar sagacity, a friend of mine discovered in a beautiful little spaniel, which he had purchased from a dealer in the canine race. When he entered a shop, he was not long in observing that his little companion made it a rule to follow at some interval, and to estrange itself from his master so much as to appear totally unconnected with him. And when he left the shop, it was the dog's custom to remain behind him till it could find an opportunity of seizing a pair of gloves, or silk stockings, or some similar property, which it brought to its master. The poor fellow probably saved his life by falling into the hands of an honest man.

NOTE 11. — CHARITY AND PAUPERS, p. 355

The Author has made an attempt in this character to draw a picture of what is too often seen, a wretched being whose heart becomes hardened and split at the world, in which she is doomed to experience much misery and little sympathy. The system of compulsory charity by poor's rates, of which the absolute necessity can hardly be questioned, has connected with it on both sides some of the most odious and malevolent feelings that can agitate humanity. The quality of true charity is not strained. Like that of mercy, of which, in a large sense, it may be accounted a sister virtue, it blesses him that gives and him that takes. It awakens kindly feelings both in the mind of the donor and in that of the relieved object. The giver and receiver are recommended to each other by mutual feelings of goodwill, and the pleasurable emotions connected with the consciousness of a good action fix the deed in recollection of the one, while a sense of gratitude renders it holy to the other. In the legal and compulsory assessment for the proclaimed parish pauper there is nothing of all this. The alms are extorted from an unwilling hand and a heart which desires the annihilation, rather than the relief, of the distressed object. The object of charity, sensible of the ill-will with which the pittance is bestowed, seizes on it as his right, not as a favour. The manner of conferring it being directly calculated to hurt and disgust his feelings, he revenges himself by becoming impudent and clamorous. A more odious picture, or more likely to deprave the feelings of those exposed to its influence, can hardly be imagined; and yet to such a point have we been brought by an artificial system of society, that we must either deny altogether the right of the poor to their just proportion of the fruits of the earth, or afford them some means of subsistence out of them by the institution of positive law.

NOTE 12. — MEG DODS, p. 428

Non omnis moriar. St. Ronan's, since this veracious history was given to the public, has revived as a sort of *alias*, or second title, to the very

pleasant village of Inverleithen upon Tweed, where there is a medicinal spring much frequented by visitors. Prizes for some of the manly and athletic sports common in the pastoral districts around are competed for under the title of the St. Ronan's Games. Nay, Meg Dods has produced herself of late from obscurity as authoress of a work on cookery, of which, in justice to a lady who makes so distinguished a figure as this excellent dame, we insert the title-page: '*The Cook and Housewife's Manual: A Practical System of Modern Domestic Cookery and Family Management.*

Cook, see all your sawces
Be sharp and poynant in the palate, that they may
Commend you; look to your roast and baked meats handsomely,
And what new kickshaws and delicate made things.

BRAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

By Mistress Margaret Dods [Mrs. Christian Isobel Johnstone], of the Cielkum Inn, St. Ronan's [Edinburgh, 1826].

Though it is rather unconnected with our immediate subject, we cannot help adding, that Mrs. Dods has preserved the recipes of certain excellent old dishes which we would be loth should fall into oblivion in our day; and in bearing this testimony, we protest that we are no way blassed by the receipt of two bottles of excellent sauce for cold meat, which were sent to us by the said Mrs. Dods, as a mark of her respect and regard, for which we return her our unfeigned thanks, having found them capital.

GLOSSARY

OF

WORDS, PHRASES, AND ALLUSIONS

- AEET** (p. 106), Holyrood, at Edinburgh, the precincts of which were a sanctuary for debtors
- A. B. MEMORIAL**, a legal statement which does not give the names of the parties concerned
- AERAY-MAN**, a witless beggar, so named from the Abraham ward in Bethlehem (Bedlam) Hospital, London, having been set apart for begging lunatics
- ARSOLVITOR**, acquittal
- AEULFARACI**, or **BAR-HEBREUS**, a Jacobite Christian of Armenia, and bishop of Aleppo, wrote in Arabic and in Syriac a *Universal History* (creation to 1297)
- AE**, one
- AFFICHE**, poster, public advertisement
- AFTERHAND**, afterwards, later
- AGIO**, rate of exchange, also the percentage charged for changing money
- AIL**, to prevent, hinder
- AIN**, own
- AEN**, iron
- ALL**, the son-in-law of Mohammed, especially revered by the Shiites, a division of the Moslem world particularly strong in Persia
- ALKORAN**, The Koran, the holy book of the Mohammedans
- ALLAN, WILL**. See Will Allan
- ALPHEUS** and **ARETHUSA**, in ancient Greek mythology are associated with Syracuse in Sicily
- AMANT**, almost
- AMOUREUX DE SEIZE ANS**, a lover of sixteen (years)
- AMPHION**, a lute-player, made the stones that formed the wall of ancient Thebes, in Greece, put themselves together under the magic of his music
- AMPHITRYON OÙ L'ON DINE**, i. e. the real giver of the feast; an allusion to Molière's *Amphitryon*
- ANCE WUD AND AYE WAUR**, once mad and ever worse, i. e. once crazy, the mad lady gets worse instead of better
- ANDREA FERRARA**, a Scottish broadsword
- ANE**, one
- ANTIGUA**, rum, from the West India Island so named
- AREUTHNOT, JOHN**, a witty physician, the friend of Dean Swift and of Pope
- ARGENT COMPTANT**, lit. ready money, i. e. perfectly good or valid
- AREOTIARIA**, art of landscape-gardening
- ASCANIUS**, the son of Æneas
- ASER**, a Turkish silver coin = ½th penny
- AUGHT**, or **OUGH**, to own, possess; possession; eight
- AULD REEKIE**, old and smoky
- AULTOUN**, the old town, place
- AWING**, owing, bill
- AWMRY**, cupboard
- BACK-HAND**, the left-hand court in tennis
- BALLANT**, ballad
- BAL PARÉ**, dress ball
- BANDEAU**, head-band
- BANDED DEBTORS**, debtors under a bond or mortgage
- BANOSTER**, winner, victor
- BARCLAY, CAPTAIN**, a celebrated pedestrian, who walked 1000 miles in 1000 hours, July 1800
- BARD OF MEMORY**, Samuel Rogers, author of *Pleasures of Memory* (1792)
- BAREGE**, or **BARÈGES**, a celebrated spa on the French side of the Pyrenees
- BARKING AND FLEEING**, going headlong into bankruptcy; entirely dispersed
- BARMY-BRAINED**, giddy, feather-brained
- BARON-BAILIE**, a kind of Scottish magistrate, the baron's deputy in a burgh of barony
- BASKET-BEAGLES**, beagles that chased a hare slipped from a basket
- BAYADAGE**, string of small talk
- BAW BEE BOWS**, halfpenny rolls (of bread)
- BEAU GARÇON**, fashionable beau
- BEDRAL**, sexton
- BEDREDDIN HASSEAN**. See *Arabian Nights*, 'Nour-eddin and his Son'
- BEGUM**, an Indian princess, or lady of high rank
- BELCHER HANDKERCHIEF**, named after a pugilist, had a dark blue ground covered with white spots, each with a small blue spot in its centre

- BELLONA**, goddess of war and strife in ancient Roman mythology
- BELTANE**, a festival on 1st of May, hence Whitsuntide
- BELTENEEROS**, a name of the hero of mediæval chivalry, Amadis of Gaul
- BENT, TO TAKE THE**, provide for one's safety, flee the country
- BETTY FOX**. See Wordsworth's poem, *The Idiot Boy*
- BEVER, or BELVIOIR, VALE OF**, on the borders of Lincolnshire and Leicestershire
- BICKER**, a wooden drinking-bowl
- BIBE**, to bear, endure; remain
- BIGG**, to build
- BILKED**, cheated, 'taken in'
- BIND**, one's ability or power (to drink)
- BING . . . ON THE LOW TONY**, rob like a footpad
- BINK**, a plate-rack
- BIRL**, drink in jovial company
- BISMILLAH**, 'In God's name,' a common Turkish exclamation
- BIT**, spot, place
- BLACK FASTING**, a very severe fast
- BLACK-FISHER**, a salmon poacher who fishes at night
- BLAW-IN-MY-LUG**, flatterer
- BLAWORT**, flower of the corn-bluebottle
- BLUNT**, money
- BOB ACRES**, a character in Sheridan's *Rivals*
- BOB-WIG**, in which the bottom locks were turned up into bobs or short curls
- BODDLE, or BODLE**, a copper coin = $\frac{1}{4}$ th penny
- BOGLE or BOGGLE**, ghost, spectre; scarecrow
- BOMBASTINE**, the stuff (silk and worsted) of which the lawyer's gown was made
- BONNEL THORNTON**, editor of *The Connoisseur*, and author of various books (1724-68)
- BONNET-LAIRD, or BANNET-LAIRD**, a small proprietor or freeholder who farms his own land
- BONZE**, a Buddhist monk, principally in China and Japan
- BOOT-HOSE**, coarse, ribbed, worsted hose, often worn over hose or finer materials
- BOSPHORUS, BANKS OF**, an allusion to Byron
- BOSWELL - DR. JOHNSON** (p. 181). See Boswell's *Life of Dr. Johnson*, under the year 1776
- BOURASQUE**, outburst, up-blazing
- BOW STREET RUNNERS**, London detectives
- BRAMAN, MR.** See Mr. Bramah
- BRISTOL STONES**, a brilliant kind of rock crystal found near Bristol
- BROSE**, oatmeal over which boiling water has been poured
- BROWN, or BROWNE, WILLIAM**, author of *Britannia's Pastorals* (1613-16)
- BROWNE**, a benevolent spirit or fairy, of the male sex
- BROWST**, brewing, mixing
- BRUCE'S FROM GONDAR**. James Bruce travelled in Abyssinia (capital, Gondar) in 1769-1772
- BRUICK**, to enjoy, possess
- BRUIT**, rumour, report
- BUSKING**, attiring, adorning oneself
- BYE, or FORBYE**, besides, to say nothing of
- BY ORDINAR**, out of the common run
- BYRON, HARRIET**. See Harriet Byron
- CA'D**, called
- CADENUS**, in Dean Swift's poem, *Cadenus and Vanessa*, i.e. Swift and Esther Vanhomrigh
- CADI**, judge
- CALLANT**, a lad
- CALLER**, fresh
- CAMPBELL, THOMAS**, the poet, author of *The Pleasures of Hope* (1799)
- CANNY**, prudent, sensible
- CANON OF STRASBURGH**. In many German bishoprics the canons or *Domherren* were obliged to be of noble blood, sometimes of the old nobility of the empire
- CANOVA, ANTONIO**, Italian sculptor (1757-1822)
- CANTLE**, the crown of the head
- CANTRIP**, a piece of mischief
- CANTY**, lively, cheerful
- CAPERNOITRY**, crabbed, irritable
- CAPILLAIRE**, a syrup made from maidenhair fern
- CAPOTED**, won every trick (in piquet), most thoroughly beaten
- CAPPIE**, a kind of beer
- CARAVANSERAIL**, a place of public rest and shelter, a sort of inn
- CARIOUS MOLENDINAR**, an ulcerated tooth with several fangs
- CARLE**, a fellow
- CARLINE**, a witch, old woman
- CARRY**, cartaway
- CAULD**, cold
- CELEBRARE DOMESTICA FACTA**, to sketch domestic manners
- CHANGE-HOUSE**, inn
- CHARLOTTE SMITH**, wrote the novels *Emmeline* (1788), *Ethelinde* (1789), *The Old Manor House* (1793), etc.
- CHEEK-HAFFIT**, side of the cheek
- CHIFFONERIE, or CHIFFONIER**, lady's fancy work-table; also sideboard
- CHITTYGONG (fowl)**, or CHITTAGONG, a district of Bengal in India
- CHIMELIA**, the treasures, plate, etc., belonging to a church
- CLACHAN**, a hamlet
- CLARISSA HARLOWE**, the heroine of the novel (1749) with that title by Samuel Richardson
- CLAYERING**, gossiping
- CLAW**, to beat
- CLECK**, hatch, cluck
- CLEEKET, or CLEIKIT**, caught, ensnared, taken
- CLEIKUM**, equivalent to 'catch 'em'
- CLEUGH**, a steep descent
- CLOUTED**, patched, mended
- COCK-A-LEEKY, or COOKIE-LEEKIE**, soup made of a cock boiled with leeks, etc.
- COCK-BREE**, cock, i.e. chicken, broth
- COCKBURN, ROBERT**, brother of Henry Lord Cockburn, and a well-known wine-merchant of Edinburgh
- COCKERSONE**, a top-knot
- COGUE**, a wooden measure
- COLLOPS, MINCED**. See Minced collops
- COMPTIS, or ACCOMPTS**, accounts
- CONCIO AD CLERUM**, an address to the clergy
- CONDIDDLING**, pilfering, filching
- CONGREVE, WILLIAM**, English dramatist (1670-1729),

- a master in the witty badinage of men of fashion
CORBIE, a raven; **CORBIE MESSENGER**, one whose errand is unsuccessful
CORK-HEADED, light-headed
CORPUS DELICTI, cause of offence
COTCHANT, lying, recumbent
COURIE, or **COWEY**, a shell used as money in parts of Southern Asia and Africa
COUTEAU DE CHASSE, a hanger, hunting-knife
COVENTRY (to send one to), to refuse to have anything to do with him socially, not even to speak to him
COWT, colt
CRACKIT, cracked
CRAIG, crag, rocky point
CRAP, a wig of rough, short hair
CRITIC, a farce by Sheridan
CRUELS, or **CRUELS**, scrofula
CRY (of players), a pack, company
CUTTLE, wheedle, flatter
CULL, fool
CURATOR BONIS, guardian, trustee
CUTTY. See Upsetting cutty
CUTTY PIPE, a short pipe
CYBELE, the great goddess of the ancient Orient, to whom the lion was sacred
used for long journeys in India
DORTS, in a sullen humour
DOUCE, quiet, sensible
DOUGHT, was able
DOWCOT, dovecot
DOWN-BYE, down yonder
DRAFFIE, a drop of spirits
DRAWCANSIE, a blustering bully in *The Rehearsal* (1672), by George Villiers, second Duke of Buckingham
DR. CULLEN, a famous medical professor of Edinburgh University (1733-90)
DEER'D PENANCE, paid penance, underwent ecclesiastical punishment, e.g. for fornication
DR. GREGORY, JAMES, a leading physician in Edinburgh (1776-1821), and medical professor in the university there
DUE-SCHELPER, lit. a gutter-beater, an idle vagabond
DULCES AMARYLLIDIS IRE, the anger of sweet Amaryllis
'DUMBARTON DRUMS', a title borrowed from the first commander of an English regiment, the Earl of Dumbarton, a follower of James II.
DUNG, knocked, beaten
DWAM, a stupor
ÉCLAIRCISSEMENT, explanation
EEN, eyes
EMMELINE, heroine of Charlotte Smith's romance, *Emmeline* (1788)
ENCOGNURE, a corner table
ETHELINDE, heroine of Charlotte Smith's romance, *Ethelinde* (1789)
ET HOC GENUS OMNE, and all that class (of people)
ET POUR CAUSE, and for a very good reason
EUPHROSYNÉ, one of the Graces in ancient Greek mythology
EVELINA, authoress of, Fanny Burney, Madame D'Arblay, published this celebrated novel in 1778
EX INTERVALLO, after an interval
FAIRE DES FRAIS DE LA CONVERSATION, sustain the burden of the conversation
FAKIR, Hindu ascetic and mendicant
FANCY, GENTLEMEN OF THE. See Gentlemen, etc.
FASH, trouble; **FASHIOUS**, troublesome
FASTING, BLACK. See Black fasting
FAUGHTA, a sort of pigeon sacred amongst the Hindus
FAUT, fault
FECK, part, the greater part
FECKLESS, spiritless
FEMME D'ATOURS, a fire-woman, lady's maid
FEMME SAVANTE, blue-stocking
FEND, difficulty
FERDINAND MENDEZ PINTO, a 16th century Portuguese traveller and adventurer
FERN-SEED, was supposed to make invisible those who carried it on their person
FERRYBRIDGE, a hamlet near Knottingley, West Riding, Yorkshire, an important station on the Great North Road in coaching days
FESTINA LENTE, hasten slowly, make a business of nothing
FÊTE CHAMPÊTRE, picnic
FEUARS, one who holds a feu (see Note 3, p. 431)
FIDALGO, a provincial form a 'hidalgo,' a Spanish nobleman
FILE, foul, soil
FIRE AWAY, FLANIGAN, or **FLANAGAN**, a boastful Royalist commandant of a castle, who, on being challenged by Cromwell to 'fire away, Flanagan,' fled without firing a shot
FIT, foot
FIVES-COURT, a hall for boxers to practise in
FLANIGAN. See Fire away, Flanagan
FLAW, blast of wind, storm of snow
FLEECING, flattering
FLESHER, butcher
FLIGHTERING, fluttering, fussing
FLISKMAHOY, literally, a giddy, thoughtless girl
FLYTING, scolding
FOLLIES, ornaments, laces
FORBEARS, ancestors
FORBYE, besides
FORTHRIGHT, straight, straightforward
FORTUNIO, in the tale so named (see Grimm's and D'Aulnoy's *Fairy Tales*), was served by Fine-ear, Strong-back, Light-foot, etc.
Fou, full

FOUNTAIN OF LIONS. *See* Grimm's *Fairy Tales*, 'The Water of Life'

FOUR-NOOKED, four-cornered
FRANCIS'S 'ANON—ANON, SIR.' *See* Shakespeare, *Henry IV.*, Part I. Act ii. sc. 4

FRAPPANT, striking
FRONDE SUPER VIRIDI, under the green trees
FUNDITUS, thoroughly
FUSHIONLESS SKINK, tasteless stuff

GAEN, gone; GAED, went; GAED AN ILL GATE, went to the bad

GALLIARD, or GALTREARD, sprightly

GALOPIN, a scullion or errand-boy

GANGING, going

GAR, to cause, make; GARS ME GRUE, gives me the creeps, terrifies me

GATE, or GAIT, way, road

GAY, very

GAZE, covered, veiled

GEAR, business, affair

GEISENED, leaking

GENTLEMEN OF THE FANCY, prize-fighters and their backers

GHAIST, ghost

GIE, give

GIFF-GAFF, one good turn deserves another

GILL-FLIRT, a giddy flirt

GIN-TWIST, a mixed drink, compounded principally of gin

GIRNING, grinning, peevish, ill-tempered

GLED, a kite

GLENLIVAT, a celebrated whisky distillery in Banffshire

GNOSTICALLY, knowingly, cleverly

GOMERIL, an ass, fool

GONDAR. *See* Bruce's from Gondar

GOUPIN, a double handful

GOW, NATHANIEL (1766-1831), a fiddler, who conducted a small band, was the son of the more celebrated

Niel Gow (1727-1807) of Inver in Perthshire

GOWK, a fool

'GRAMACHREE MOLLY,' known also as 'Molly Astore,' composed by G.

Ogle, and very popular in the end of the 18th century

GROBERT, or GROSSART, a gooseberry

GRUE. *See* under Gar

GUIDED, treated

GULLY, a large knife

GUSE, goose

GUSING-IRON, a smoothing iron

GYMNOSOPHIST, ancient

Hindu ascetical philosopher, the best known of whom is Kalanus, who burned himself to death in presence of Alexander the Great

HADGI, or HAJJI, a pious Mohammedan who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca

HAIL, or HALE, whole; HALE AND FEIR, right and proper, safe and sound

HAMAKO, a fool, witless person

HAP, hop

HARKS, brains

HARRIET BYRON, in Richardson's novel, *Sir Charles Grandison* (1753)

HAUD, to hold; NEITHER TO HAUD NOR TO BIND, in a state of uncontrollable excitement, brimming with pride

HAUGH. *See* Holm

HAVERT, foolish chatterer, gossip

HEATHER-TAP, a tuft or bunch of heather

HELLIGATE, giddy, wild

HEMPIE, roguish, romping; a rogue

HERD CALLANT, shepherd lad

HERITORS, the landowners and proprietors of a parish

HET HA'-HOUSE, the comfortable hall or mansion

HIGHLAND HILLS (p. 39), an allusion to Sir Walter Scott

HINNY, or HINNIE, honey—a term of endearment

HIRPLE, to hobble

HOLLAH. *See* Faughta

HOLM, or HAUGH, level ground beside a stream

HOOLY, softly, slowly

HORSE-COUPER, horse-dealer

HOTCH, to jerk oneself along in a sitting posture

HOTTLE, hotel; to toddle, stagger on

HOUGH, thigh

HOUSE-TYKE, house-dog, watch-dog

HOWFF, a resort

HOWK, dig; HOWKIT, dug

HUNTER, DR. ALEX. H., of York, lived 1729 to 1809, and wrote *Culina Famulatrix Medicinæ* (1804)

HURLEY-HACKET, an carriage

HYDER ALI, the native of Mysore in the India (1728-82)

ILK, ILKA, each

ILL-RED-UP, disorderly, neglected

IL PENSEROSO, dark, choly, the title of a poem

IMAUM, the religious who leads the prayers a Mohammedan mosque

IMPLEMENTED, commenced effectual

INGULPHUS, an old chronicler of 13th century

INK-STANDISH, an ink intended, prosecuted

IN TRANSITU, on the way

INTRA PARIETES, closed doors

IN VOTIS, an answer prayers, welcome

IRRITANCY, a declaration rendering null and

ISLE OF DOGS, in the Thames opposite Greenwich

ISLE OF SAINTS, Ireland

'I THINK NOT OF FIT (p. 189), altered

Byron's *Childe Harold* Canto II. stanza lxv

JANIZARY, strictly, a Turkish soldier

JAUD, jade

JAUGS, saddle-bags

JEANNETTE OF AN should doubtless be *fille de chambre* of

See Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*: Paris

JEFFREY WINESAU, his of the Crusades, an Irish writer of the 17th century

JER-FALCON, a species hawk

JINK, to dodge, give slip to

JIRBLING, emptying from vessel to vessel

Jo, sweetheart, (my dear)

JOHNSON AND JOHN Y (p. 181). *See* Boswell

JOHNSON, under year

JOSEPH, a riding-coat a broad cape and button down the front, generally worn by women

sometimes by men

KALE, broth

KHAN, a place of public and shelter, a sort of

- KITCHEN-FEE, dripping
 KITCHNER, DR. WM. K., of LONDON, lived 1775 to 1821, a well-known epicure in his day, and author of *Apicius Redivivus; or, the Cook's Oracle* (1817)
 KITTLE, to tickle, teaze
 KITTLED, were born
 KNAPPING, breaking;
 KNAPPING ENGLISH, speaking English in an affected way
 Kouscousou, a Moorish dish, consisting chiefly of millet flour, meat, oil, and baobab leaves
 KUCHENWITTERS, a variety of pistols, presumably named after their original maker
 LADY CLEMENTINA, an allusion to Richardson's *Sir Charles Grandison*
 LAGGED, delivered up to justice and punished for crime
 LAKES OF CUMBERLAND (p. 39), where Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey lived
 LAMER-BEAD, amber bead
 LANDLOUPER, charlatan, adventurer
 LAPUTA, the flying island visited by Gulliver, where each philosopher had an attendant 'flapper' to awaken him from his profound meditations and bring him back to every-day life
 LAVE, the remainder, what is left
 LAWING, OF LAWN, a tavern reckoning
 LEADENHALL STREET, in the City of London, contained the head office of the East India Company
 LEA-RIG, unploughed land or hillside
 LEE, a lie
 LET ABER, let alone, especially
 LEWIS, MAT. See Mat Lewis
 LEYDEN, in Holland, the seat of a distinguished medical school, at which many eminent Scottish surgeons and physicians were trained
 LEYDEN, JOHN, a Scottish poet and Oriental scholar (1775-1811)
 LIMMER, worthless creature, idle huzzy
 LINK OUT, pay down smartly; LINKING, tripping it
 LINN, a cataract; pool at the foot of a cataract
 LIPPEN, trust, confide
 LOLLOR, to lounge or loll idly and awkwardly
 LOON, a fellow, person
 LOOT, allowed
 LORD CHESTERFIELD, author of *Letters to his Son* (1774), teaching him how to become an accomplished man of the world
 LORD KELLY, Thomas Alexander Erskine, sixth Earl of Kellie, known as 'the musical earl,' was equally celebrated for his hard drinking
 LORD O' SESSION, a Scottish law lord, bearing an official title
 LOUP, leap
 LOVES OF THE PLANTS, a poem (1789) by Dr. Erasmus Darwin, grandfather of Charles Darwin
 LUCKIE, a title of respect applied to old dames in Scotland
 LYCORIS, the mistress of the Roman poet Gallus. See Virgil's *Eclogues*, x.
 MACHAON, son of Æsculapius, and surgeon to the Greeks in the Trojan War
 MACHIAVEL, or MACHIAVELLI, a crafty diplomatist and statesman of Florence (1469-1527)
 M'PHERSON, DAVID, author of *Geographical Illustrations of Scottish History* (1796)
 MAGNUM, a bottle holding two quarts
 MAILING, a farm
 MARAVEDI, an old Spanish copper coin worth less than a farthing
 MARCH, boundary, dividing-line
 MARRIAGE, AUTHORESS OF, Susan Edmonston Ferrier, a friend of Sir Walter Scott, published *Marriage* in 1818
 MASK, mash, brew
 MASTER STEPHEN, a country gull in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*
 MAT LEWIS, or MATTHEW GREGORY LEWIS, author of *The Monk* (1795), and other tales of Wonder and mystery
 MAUN, must
 MAUNDERED, mumbled
 MAWKIN, a hare
 MAZAREEN, or MAZARIN, a deep blue colour
 MEIKLE. See Muckle
 MEITH, a mark
 MELL, to meddle with, interfere with
 MELPOMENE, the muse of tragedy in ancient Greek mythology
 MEMORY, BARD OF. See Bard of Memory
 MENSTRUUM, a fluid that acts as a solvent
 MESS, mass, the Roman Catholic service of worship
 MINCED COLLOES, meat cut up very fine
 MISCA'D, abused, reviled
 'MON AÏNE PARLE,' etc. (p. 68), My ass can talk, and, what is more, can talk well
 MONCHIEFF, DR. JOHN, or TIPPERMALLUCH, author of *Tippermalluch's Receipts* (2d ed., Leith; 1775), was not free from the charge of being an empiric
 MONSIEUR LE FRÈRE, the brother
 MONY WORDS, MICKLE DROUGHT, talking's dry work
 MOORISH, meant for Arabic
 MORAVIAN MISSION. The Herrnhuters or Moravians, a Protestant sect that originated (1467) in Bohemia, and was revived (1722) in Saxony, have been active in mission work
 MORE SCOTICO, in Scotch fashion
 MORNING, morning dram
 MORVEN, in Macpherson's *Ossian*, the western parts of Scotland
 MOUNT ATHOS, a peninsula stretching into the Ægean Sea from the south coast of Turkey, rises steeply from the sea to 6400 feet in height
 MR. BRAMAH, inventor (1748-1814), amongst other things, of a patent lock, which was in great repute down to the Great Exhibition of 1851
 MUCKLE, or MEIKLE, much; MUCKLE WHEEL, wheel of Fortune
 MUIR, moor
 MULTIPLEPOUNDING, a method of settling on demand rival claims to the same fund

MULTURE, the miller's fee for grinding grain
MUNDUNGUS, vile, ill-smelling tobacco

MUNT UP, mount up, set up
MURGEON-MAKER, posture-master, maker of grimaces; MURGEONS, mouths
MUTCH, a woman's cap

NEEVIE, NEEVENICK-NACK, a game with marbles, similar to 'odd or even'

NEIST, next
N'IMPORTE, never mind, it doesn't matter

NON OMNIS MORIAR, I shall not wholly die, *i. e.* memory survives death
NUNQUAM NON PARATUS, never unprepared

ODD-COME-SHORTLIES, an early day, day soon to come

O'KEEFE, JOHN, an Irish dramatist (1747-1833)

OLD MAN OF THE SEA. *See Arabian Nights*, 'Sinbad the Sailor'

'OPTAT AFRUM,' etc. (p. 39), he wishes a wild boar or a tawny lion would come down from the hill

ORLANDO, a character in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*

ORONOCO, a variety of snuff, named from the river Orinoco in South America

OR THEY WAN HAME, etc. (before) they reached home

OSSIAN, LANGUAGE OF, Gaelic, in which language, according to Macpherson, the *Poems of Ossian* were preserved

OWERHEAD, every one of them

PABOUCHES, slippers

PACHA WITH THREE TAILS, a pasha of the highest rank, entitled to have three horse-tails on his war-standard

PAD, ON THE, on the tramp, on foot

PALINODE, in Scotch libel cases, a formal recantation exacted in addition to damages

PANPHARMACON, all-heal, universal cure

PARNELL'S HERMIT, was written by Thomas Parnell, a minor poet of Queen Anne's reign

PARRITCH, porridge

PAWKY, shrewd

PEASE BANNOCK, a cake or scone made of pease-meal

PECCANT, erring, faulty

PENDANTE, attendant, companion

PENINSULA, WAR IN (p. 426), the war of 1808-13 between the English and Napoleon's generals in Spain

PENTAPOLIN WITH THE NAKED ARM. *See Don Quixote*, Part I. Bk. iii. ch. iv.

PEREGRINE PICKLE, a novel (1751) by Smollett

PEREGRINE—WILLOUGHBY, an allusion to Peregrine Bertie, Lord Willoughby d'Eresby, a famous captain in Elizabeth's reign

PETRUCHIO, in Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*, Act ii. sc. 1

PICE, copper coin of India = $\frac{1}{2}$ farthing

PICKLE, a small quantity

PIDCOCK AND POLTRO, keepers of a wild-beast show

PINTO. *See Ferdinand Mendez Pinto*

PLACEBO, a medicine intended to pacify, rather than medicinally benefit

PLACK, small copper coin = $\frac{1}{4}$ penny; PLACK AND BAWWEE, to the last farthing

PLISKIE, a trick

PLOTTIE, mulled wine

POCK, a poke, bag

POCOCURANTE, one who affects indifference

POLYNICES. *See Thebaid*

POLLY PEACHUM (p. 334), a character in Gay's *Beggar's Opera* (1728)

POMANDER-BOX, perfume box

PONEY, the sum of £25

PONTY, or PONTY, a 'great forester' and 'lord of the woodland,' a deformed and eccentric contemporary of Scott

POORTITH, poverty

POOTRY, poultry

PORTEUR, bearer

POW, head, crown

PREÇIEUSE, an affected, finical woman

PRICK-MY-DAINTY, or, PRICK-ME-DAINTY, finical, fine

PRIEVE, proof, legal probation

PRINCESS CARADOO, an adventuress, Mary Willcocks, who, early in the 19th century, posed at

Bath as an Eastern princess, and again, about 1824, in Bond Street, London

PROCK'S VERBAL, the written statement of the proceedings

PROFESSOR JACKSON, a teacher of boxing, mentioned in Pierce Egan's *Life in London*

PROLUSION, prelude, introduction

PSEUDO-BIJOUTERIE, would-be ornaments, false jewellery

PTOLEMAIS, St. Jean d'Acre, on the coast of Syria

PYOT, magpie

PYTHAGOREAN ENTERTAINMENT, fruit and vegetable food only

QUACKLE, to quack, croak

QUÆRE ALIUD HOSPITIUM, go and find some other inn

QUAIGH, a shallow drinking-cup with two handles, generally made of wood

QUANTUM SUFFICIT, a plentiful supply

QUART-STOUP, flagon holding a quart

QUEAN, wench, lass

'QUIS NOVUS HIC HOSPEX?' What new guest is this?

RAFF, a worthless fellow, a nobody

RAGION, a commercial or a trading company

RATTAN, a cane or walking-stick

RAUGHEN SIE, etc. (p. 323). Smoke as much as you please. I have got my pipe too. See what a beautiful head it has

RAX, to stretch

RAYMUND OF ST. GILES, or RAYMOND, COUNT OF TOULOUSE, the leader of the First Crusade, was not an author

REDDING, tidying

REDGILL, DR., a vulgar, selfish gourmand in Miss Ferrier's novel, *Marriage* (1818)

'REFINED HIMSELF,' etc. (p. 235), from a poem, entitled *Character of a Good Parson*

REGIS AD EXEMPLAR, following the example of the king, or chief person

REISE-BAG, travelling-bag

REMORA, obstacle, hindrance
REMIOTIS TESTIBUS, no witnesses being near

- RERUM DOMINOR**, etc. (p. 108), all citizens ought to know about legal business
RESIDUUM, last small portion left over
RESTIFF, or **RESTITIVE**, stubborn, obstinate
RETENUE, reserve
RIG, a trick, frolic
ROOF-TREE, the beam that supports the roof
ROULEAU, a roll of coined money
ROW, roll
RUCKLING, rattling, making the noise called the death-rattle in the throat
RUSE DE GUERRE, stratagem of war

ST. GILES, a 6th century saint, famous for his humility; he refused presents offered to him by Childebert, king of France
ST. JAMES'S PLACE, London, where Samuel Rogers had his house
ST. JOHN D'ACRE TO JERUSALEM. The distance is 80 miles, not 23, and the direction is south-south-east
SAIR, sorrowful, sad; very, great; **SAIR FOOT**, an emergency, strait, necessity; **SAIR WEIRD**, sad lot, sorrowful state
SALAM ALICUM, the usual Mohammedan greeting, meaning, 'Peace be with you'
SANCTUM SANCTORUM, most sacred place
SANNAZARO, JACOPO, Italian poet, author of the pastoral poem, *Arcadia* (1504)
SANTON, a Mohammedan saint or enthusiast
SASINE, (legal) investiture
SAVOIR FAIRE, management, skill
SCANDERBEG, or **ISKANDER** (Alexander) **BEG** or **BEY**, the Albanian hero of the 15th century, famous for his resistance to the Turks
SCART, scratch
SCATE-BUMPLE, skate-tail
SCAUFF and **RAFF**, tag-rag and bobtail
SCAURS, becomes frightened at
SLATE, slate
SCOTS PINT = 3, sometimes 4, pints English; **SCOTS PINT** OVERHEAD, each of them alike took his pint in full
SCOUTHERED, singed, scorched
SCRATCH-WIG, a kind of small wig
SCROG, a stunted bush or scrub
SECUNDUM ARTEM, in the light of art; according to rule
SEDET POST EQUITEM ATRACURA, dark care sits at the rider's back
SEJOUR, place of abode
SET THEM UP AND SHUTE THEM FORWARD, expression of scornful contempt at another's pretensions or assumptions of superiority
SCHEERRO INSIGNE, notorious cut-throat
SHIELING, hut
SHOOL, shovel
SHROFF, or **SHARAF**, a banker or money-changer in India
SIB, related by blood
SIC, such
SIX' SYNE, ago, since
SIR EYRE COOTE, Irish soldier (1726-83), defeated Hyder Ali, and saved the Madras Presidency for the English
SIR JOHN SINCLAIR, Scottish lawyer and author (1754-1835)
SIR JOSHUA, the painter, Sir Joshua Reynolds
SIR SYDNEY, or **SIR WILLIAM SIDNEY SMITH**, valiantly repelled the attacks which Napoleon made upon Acre in 1799
SIR WILLIAM WORTHY, figures in *The Gentle Shepherd* (1725), by the Scottish poet, Allan Ramsay
SKEEL OF OUR SECT, knowledge of our sex, (you) understand our sex
SKEELY, skillful
SKETCHERS, skates (for locomotion on ice)
SKYLARKED, tricked
SLAISTER, mess, daub
SLOAN, a storm of abuse, scolding
SMITH, CHARLOTTE. See Charlotte Smith
SNOOR, smother
SNAP, a small biscuit
SNECK-DRAWING, crafty
SNOODED, bound up with a snood or fillet
'SO CONSTANTLY IN POOR-TITH'S SIGHT', etc. (381), from Burns, *Two Dogs*
SOOP, sweep
SOORN, to sponge upon, obtrude oneself upon
SORT, to manage, order; **SORTING**, scolding, reproving
SOSIA, a person who is identically like another, taken from Plautus's comedy, *Amphitruo* or *Amphitryon*
SOSSINGS AND SOOPINGS, made-up soups and messes
SOUGH, sigh; **A CALM SOUGH**, a quiet tongue
SPEER, inquire, ask
SPLEUCHAN, a fur pouch for holding tobacco
START AND OWELOUP, said of a flock of sheep, when, being suddenly alarmed, they set off at full gallop and leap over the nearest fence; hence, an encroachment on a neighbour's property
STATUS, PUBLIUS PAPINUS, a Roman poet of the 1st century A.D., author of *Thebais* or *Thebaid* (q. v.)
STERED, stirred, interfered with
STEPHEN, MASTER. See Master Stephen
STRAPPED, preparatory to hanging, hanged
STRASBURGH, CANON OF. See Canon of Strasburg
STREEKIT, stretched, applied to a corpse
SULD, should
SULIOTE. The Suliotes, a tribe of Greek-Albanian origin, settled at Suli and Parga in Epirus, were renowned for their resistance to Turkish rule
SULTAN MAHMOUD, of Ghazni, in Afghanistan, wrought great desolation in India in several invasions. He was the first prince (931-1030) to assume the title of *sultan*
SWARR, to swoon
SYDENHAM COMMON (p. 33), where the poet Campbell made his home
SYLLABUB, a curd made of wine or cider with milk or cream
SYNDING, rinsing
SYNE, since, ago

TAILZIE, a bond of entail
TAPPIT-HEN, a measure of claret = 3 quarts. See *Guy Mannering*, Note 9, p. 429
TATTLER, a watch

- TAWTIE**, awkward, slovenly girl
TENTING, probing
TÊTE EXALTÉE, a little queer
THERBAID, an epic by Statius (*q. v.*) on the struggle between the two brothers, Polyneices and Eteocles of Thebes
THEMIS, goddess of justice, in ancient Greek mythology
THEROUT, or **THAIROWT**, in the open air
THORNTON, BONNEL. See Bonnel Thornton
THRAWN, thwarted, opposed
THREFFIT, persisted, insisted upon
TIETANIA, an allusion to a pamphlet entitled *Neck-clothitania*, or *Tietania*, being an *Essay on Starchers*. By One of the Cloth (1818)
TINKLER, tinker, tramp
TINTO, DICK. See Dick Tinto
TINTOCK, probably Tinto, a conspicuous hill in Lanarkshire
TITTOO, the son and successor of Hyder Ali (*q. v.*)
TITUPPING, lively, full of spirit
TOO'D, dressed
'TO HIS DUTY PROMPT', etc. (p. 234), from Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*
TOX, taste, style
TONTINE SUBSCRIPTION, a method of insurance by which after each death the benefit devolves upon the survivors, until only one is left, who becomes sole owner
TONY LUMPKIN, a character in Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*
TOON, empty
TOUCHSTONE, the clown in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*
TOURBILLON, vortex, whirlwind
TOUT COURT, bluntly and briefly
TOZIE, a shawl of goats' wool
TRACTUS TEMPORIS IN GREMIO (legal), a deed of temporary contract
TRANKUMS, flimsy ornaments, laces, etc.
TRISTRAM SHANDY, in Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*: Paris. See also Jeannette of Amiens
TROKE, to traffic, do business with, in a small way
TU ME LO PAGHERAI, I will pay you out for it
TURBACIOUS, peaty, turfy
TWA ENDS OF A HANDKERCHER (p. 425), in cases of mortal enmity the antagonists or duellists sometimes stood back to back, each holding the corner of a handkerchief, then, at a given signal, turned right about and fired
TWAL, twelve
ULLAH KERIM, God is merciful
ULTRONEOUS, uncalled-for, voluntarily offering what is not asked for
UMQUHLE, the late, deceased
UN BON DIABLE, a good sort of fellow
UNCO, particular, uncommon
UP-BYE, up yonder
UPCAST, upset, startling surprise
UPSETTING CUTTY, assuming jade, one aping the manners of her superiors
URES IN RURE, town life in the country
URAGE, or **USANCE**, or **USE** (p. 427), interest for the use of money
USQUEBAUGH, whisky
VANESSA. See Cadenus
VENTA, an inn
VERGEBEN SIE, etc. (p. 323). Forgive me, sir, I was bred in the Imperial service, and must smoke a little
VIS ET MODIS, by (various) ways and means
VITA INCERTA, MORIS CERTISSA, life is uncertain, but death very sure
'VOILÀ CE QUE C'EST D'AVOIR DES TALENS', That's what talent will do, you see
WAD, would; **WADNA**, would not
WAE, woeful, sorrowful
WAME-FOU', bellyful
WAN HAME, reached home, got home
WARK ABOUT, HELD SIC A, made such an ado about, set such store by
WA'S, walls
WATEE, valley, inhabitants of a valley
WAUR, worse
WEIRD, destiny
WHAT FOR NO? why not?
WHAT'S YOUR WULL? What do you want? What is it?
WHEEN, a few, pack of
WHILES, sometimes
WHULLYWHANG, flattery
WILL ALLAN, or **SIR WILLIAM ALLAN**, a Scottish historical painter (1782-1850)
WILLIAM OF TYRE, a French chronicler of the 12th century, who was made archbishop of Tyre
WINDLESTRAE, a blade or stalk of grass, any trifling object
WINDOWS, SHUT UP HER (p. 10), an allusion to the tax on glazed house-windows
WIS, guess
WODGENS, a variety of pistols, presumably named after their original maker
WUD, mad
WULL, will, wish; **HAS WIT AT WULL**, is equal to the occasion, knows quite well what to do. See also What's your wull
WUSS, wish
YANKING, smart; fast-talking
YINCE, once

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